THE CURSED FAMILY;

OR,

A Short Tract,

Shewing the Pernicious Influence of Wicked *Prayer-less Houses*, upon this Church and Kingdom.

Humbly Tender'd

By way of Subserviency to *His Majesties Royal Proclamations*, and *Acts* of *Parliament*, for Preventing and Punishing *Immorality* and *Prophaneſs*.

The Curſe of the Lord is in the Houſe of the Wicked, But he Bleſſeth the Habitation of the Juſt, Prov. 3. 33.

Pour out thy Fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name, for they have Eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and conſumed him, and have made his Habitation Deſolate, Jer. 10. laſt.

Μὴ πλανᾶσθε ἀδελφοί μου, οἱ οἶκοι ὑμῶν βασιλείαν Θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν. *Ign. Ep. ad Eph.*

Pietas eſt cognoſcere Deum, cujus cognitionis hæc ſumma eſt, ut eum colas: Nec tantum hoc in Templo putes tibi eſſe faciendum, ſed & domi, & in ipſo etiam cubili tuo. Lact.

By *Thomas Riſley* Maſter of Arts, and ſometime Fellow of *Pembrook-Colledge* in *Oxford*.

With a Prefatory Epiſtle by the Reverend Mr. *John Howe*.

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A PREFACE TO THE Reader.

THE *Author* of this *Discourse* (Christian *Reader*) is a Person tho' of real Value, who yet hath so very Low an Esteem of himself, as to think my Recommendation may give some advantage to this his Performance. They are indeed very Accidental Circumstances,

ces, that make this difference, very often, between ſome and others, in the Eye of the World. Otherwiſe, that might well be ſaid, which was in that great Inſtance; *I have need to ——come to thee, and comeſt thou to me?* It is evident to thoſe who know him, that the many years, heretofore, wherein he drew *Academick* Breath, and liv'd an Ornament to the *Society*, whereof he was long a Member, were not trifled away. There he paſt his time as a *Recluſe*; more acquainted with *his Study*, than the *Theater*. He cloſely purſu'd his deſign; more to acquire ſolid, uſeful *Knowledge*, and *Learning*, than *Fame*. And ſince, in his long Rural Receſs, his deſign hath been the ſame; and his way of Living hath little differ'd, in a Choſen Obſcurity; contented rather to Shine to *Himſelf*, than the World.

Yet the Urgency of Conſcience, and a deſire to do good to the Soules of Men, hath wrung from him this ſhort *TREATISE*. An Off-ſpring that hath much

much of the Parents Image; appearing with no Oſtentation of Learning. But wherein may be ſeen a Pious Mind, tinctur'd by much Study, and Converſe with Books, an Acquaintance with the Literate World, which begot an habit, that is, rather *by his Speech*, unwarily *bewray'd*, than deſignedly *ſhewn*. The Scope and Drift of the Diſcourſe, ſhews him a Man of Thought, and Proſpect: diſcovers thoughts intent upon the preſent Age, but not confin'd to it: making, from it, an Eſtimate of the ſad Tendency of things, and their gloomy Aſpect upon the future. While *Chriſtian Families*, Baptiz'd in ſo great, and venerable Names, and that ſhould, if any, be Seminaries of Religion, and Vertue, are ſo commonly the Seed-plots of all Impiety and Wickedneſs; and the Numerous Fountains whence Miſeries and Curſes are diffuſed among a Chriſtian People!

My little leaſure allow'd me not throughly to peruſe it: But its ſcope,

and the Spirit wherewith (by glances) I perceive it is Writ, makes me hope, (*Reader*) it may be of much use.

Thine, in our common Saviour,

John Howe.

THE

THE AUTHOR'S Epistle.

To all Heads of *Families* from the Father of Mercies, through *Jesus Christ*, in whom all the FAMILIES of the Earth are blessed, Holiness here, and Happiness hereafter.

My Brethren, Hearers, Neighbours and Relations,

CHrist hath taught us (who is our Mediator) how far to extend our Prayers, not only to our Friends, but to our Enemies and Persecutors. And

will Chriſt (who alſo is ordain'd Judge of the World) take it well at the Great Day, That Parents make not continual Prayers, Morning and Evening for, and with their Children, and the reſt of their Families? Are not Children the divided pieces of your ſelves? Will not that ſame στοργὴ, *or* Natural Affection (*a tye ſpun out of your own Bowels*) *move you to take care of their Souls as well as their Bodies? You are not onely Parents Natural, but Chriſtian, and have Promiſed in the Preſence of God and his Church, that your Children ſhould be Vertuouſly brought up to lead a Godly and Chriſtian Life. O remember your Promiſe made at their Baptiſm, and do not Unchriſten them by your Breach of Covenant! O Pray, That God would make you inſtrumental for their Spiritual well-being, as he hath for their Natural being. Beware of Poyſoning the Soules of your Children, whoſe Bodies you have nurſt at your breaſts, and fed at your Tables. How can ſuch Parents anſwer it at the great day of Appearance, who, by wicked Examples, teach their Children to Curſe and Swear,*

Lye

Lye, Cheat, Break the Sabbath, and to make no reckoning of Religion? Be not deceived, for if you be not Chriſtians in your own Houſes (whatever profeſſion you make in the Houſe of God) your Chriſtianity is unſound. Aſſure your ſelves, that if Chriſtianity were poſſeſt of your Hearts, it would be Practiſed in your Houſes. Is not Sin the Plague of the Heart? Is it not of an active, infecting, prevailing nature? Is not Sin allways with us, and diffuſeth it ſelf into all places where we live? Doubtleſs Sin follows Men whitherſoever they goe, to Church, Market, and home again. What would you have Religion to be? What is Chriſtianity? Muſt Religion be a Stranger, or ſome ſoft Gueſt, who comes but ſeldom to ſee you, whoſe company, after a while, becomes faſtidious? What would you make of true Piety, What would you have Chriſtianity to be? A deſpiſed Inferiour, to ſtand or fall, to come or goe at your pleaſure, taken in, caſt out, uſed a little, and then laid aſide? It cannot be ſach a Thing. *But true Religion and Chriſtianity is* That Thing, *which breaths Heavenly, Regenerating, Renewing, Recreating Influences: It is, That ſame Ancient,*

Sacred

Sacred, Awſom Thing, *which pierceth the Soul, the Heart,* Conſcience, *and by the Power of God, changeth the whole Man. Laſtly, (O all you Heads of Families) be not deceived, if you and your Houſholds be Religious, and Chriſtians Indeed, that Religion will Bear the Image of Holineſs and Righteonſneſs, making not onely your Houſes, but your Soules and Bodies, Temples for the Holy Ghoſt to dwell in. If what is here written in this* Short Tract [By Way of Motive] *prevail with any One Family in a Pariſh, or any one Member of a Family (ſo Precious is the Soules Salvation) to become* Practiſers *of* Piety *in their Houſes, I ſhall rejoyce that I have not Run in vain, nor Laboured in vain, through Jeſus Chriſt or Saviour, to whom be Glory for ever. Amen.*

T. R.

THE

THE
Curſed Family

CHAP. I.

The General Nature of Families, *and of* Chriſtian Families *Relatively conſider'd as* Members *of the* Church.

Natural Inſtinct of the Dumb Creature teacheth Moral Duties in Families.

AMong the very Beaſts of the Field, Fowls of the Air, and Fiſh of the Sea, ſome obſcure Reſemblances of Government, greater and leſſer Societies, Kingdoms, Cities, and Families, the great Searchers into Philoſophy have diſcovered. By God's Ordination at firſt they keep their Places, obſerve their Times, do their Work, Build, Furniſh, make Dens, Caves, Burrows, Neſts, ſet up Houſe, break up Houſe, breed up their Young, help, and diſpoſe

diſpoſe of them abroad for Common Good. True it is, theſe Patterns are but imperfectly drawn in theſe Creatures, yet they point at Excellent Education, Laws and Virtues, and Teach the Wiſeſt, Sobriety, Fidelity, Chaſtity, Amity, Gratitude, Vigilancy, Diligence, and unwearied care of themſelves and thoſe belonging to their Charge.

The foundation of Families God's Inſtitution.

After the Almighty had finiſht his Work, created *Adam*, and Placed him in Paradiſe, he was pleaſed to ſay, *It is not good that Man ſhould be alone, I will make him an help Meet for him.*

How the Word Family is taken here.

Although the Word [*Family*] ſtrictly taken, ſignifieth that Order of Mankind which is United in Marriage, ſignifying the Terms of Husband and Wife, Parents, Children, Maſter, Servant, yet here it doth include *Houſholds* made of kind *Friends* living together for their mutual Benefit, as *Men* and *Chriſtians*: And alſo, it doth Include the *Superior Societies* of *Academical Diſcipline*, and the *Inferior* of *Countrey Schooles*. *Both* which as they be of *great uſe* for *Magiſtracy* and *Miniſtry*, ſo they ought to be of Special Influence to Maintain Religion and Chriſtian Government in Church and State.

The Formal and final cauſes of Families

That Famous Orator, whoſe Name is turned into a Sir-Name of Eloquence, (as *Quintilian* hath it) ſpeaking of the Union

of

of Families, hath Written, that there is a more *Noble Principle* of *Human Societies* then *Senſe*, to wit, the *Attractive Power* of *Reaſon*, which by Counſels, Precepts, Converſe, Deciſions, and Judgments, Cements and Strengtheneth Societies. But God's Word ſpeaking hereof, ſtrikes an higher Note, no leſs a Union for Marriage then [*In the Lord*] with the excluſive Particle [*Tantum*] *in Domino*, *Only in the Lord.* If this Union were obſerved, How much more Happy would Families, Relations, Pariſhes, Magiſtrates, Miniſters, Kingdoms and Churches be?

It is a moſt Dangerous Deſign, to think of Multiplying Vice and Impiety by gathering into Societies, as if the Leſſer Sins of Single Life, Married into Company, might take Liberty to ſwel into a Flood, *Gen.* 6. 25. We may not think that Families and Societies were Conſtituted for Natural and Secular Ends, but for Political and Eccleſiaſtical Ends, the *Good* of *Countrey* and the *Church* of *God.* *Therefore that* was an *Excellent Anſwer* made to *one* admiring a *Fair Houſe*, to wit, Thou lookeſt upon the Glorious *Outſide* of the *Building*, and calleſt that an *Houſe*, not *looking within*, *how well Children* are *Governed* and *Educated*, *Marriage Honoured*, the *Family* and all belonging to it Plut. Conv.

it *prudently managed*. *He* (ſaith the Author) *that hath ſuch an Houſe, liveth in a Palace, though in a Piſmires Hill.* From what hath been ſaid, it is evident, how much *good* or *hurt* may proceed from Families. For although this *Capacity* muſt not contend with *greater Societies* for *Precedency* of *Honour*, yet for *Priority* of *Nature*, and *Elderſhip* of *Time*, it carrieth it from all Societies on Earth. It being (without Diſpute) that of Families, Towns and Cities, great States are Embodied. Therefore as in *Natural Bodies*, if the *firſt Concoction* be *Imperfect*, it is hardly Corrected in the *latter*; So in *Civil Bodies* if *Families* and *Villages* (through want of Good Government) abound in Vitious Manners, the Malignancy preſently infects Kingdoms and Churches, to which they do belong. It may be, at the firſt, that the Narrowneſs of Private Walls and Houſholds, ſend Evil Manners into the World, with ſome kind of *Puſillanimous Dulneſs*, which coming into Places of *Publick Concourſe*, grow *Impudent* and *refuſe* to be *aſhamed*. Hence it is, that *Swearing*, *Swilling*, *Debauchery* and *Immorality*, Contempt of Religion and Sobriety, become (in a while) *Popular* and all in *Faſhion*. If *Parents* give not *Check* to Family Sins in their Children at *Home*, when they *go forth*, they meet with *Temptations* and

Danger of great States from Wicked Families.

and *Patrons*, which *turn* their Youthful Exorbitances, into Immoveable Habit. It is eaſy to *obſerve*, that the *want* of *Family-Religion* is the *Cauſe* of the *Viſible Decay* of the *Wellfare* of *Church* and *State*.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Concerning the Church of God.

The Significations of the word Church. And how it is taken here.

THE word [*Church*] is vulgarly taken for the Material place, where the People Assemble to Worship God, sometimes for the Juridical Power of Church-Officers, and sometimes for the Church-Revenues. But here it is taken for, The Visible Church of Christ, Militant upon the Earth, as it Comprehends Believers of All Places and Times from first to last; And as it is made up of Particular Churches or Societies of Believers; And these made up of Believing Families. A Christian Family should be the *Epitome* and *Nursery* of the *Church*, But (alas) it is far otherwise at this day. A Minister may go into divers Families in the Parish and Chappelry, and not a Word of Scripture Read, nor a Prayer made in the Family all the Week long, as if Religion were An *Enemy* not A *Friend* to their *House*; or, That *Religion* were a *Duty Onely* on the *Sabbath-Day*, and not on the Week day.

The

The Church of God, at the firſt, was *Domeſtical*, not *National*, till the Holy Line grew *Strong* and *Populous* from Good *Families*; As from *Adam*, *Seth*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Shem* (who lived till *Iſaac* was 50 years old) *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, by Promiſe, *&c.* And ſo it came to paſs in After-times, that as *Poſterity* in *Families Degenerated*, ſo the *Church Degenerated*, as in *Cain*, *Ham*, *Iſhmael*, *Eſau*. Thus it is in our Days, *Ungodly Families* are the *Decay* of God's *Church*; they make *Thin* Congregations, they bring a *Waſt* upon the *Solemn Aſſemblies*. What an *Odious* Thing is it to Loiter away the Lord's Day? What an Abſurdity to *Indulge* the *Fleſh* upon the *Lord's Day*, and give the *Fleſh* no *Reſt* upon the Week Day? What a piece of Wickedneſs is it, to go forth all the Week to Serve the World, and Refuſe to go forth on the Lord's Day to Serve him? Who would think that Sabbath-Profanation were ſo ſhameleſs in Families called Chriſtian? Why ſhould a *poor excuſe* hinder Men and Women from the Church, which muſt not from the Market? How many *Halts* do ſome *Make*, when they ſhould *Goe* to the *Church*, to Sanctify the Lord's-Day in their Conſcionable Attendance upon God's Ordinances? What an *Unſeemly* Thing is it to *Skulk* at *Home*,

The Cauſe of the Churches Decay in our days.

or at a *Neighbours House*, to *Chatt* and *Talk* away, to *Feast* away, *Sleep* away, *Surfeit* away, *Bibb* and *Fiddle*, *Smoak* and *Pipe*, for *Carnal Pleasure*; to *Visit* away, and, *for Profit*, to *Travel* away the *Lord's*-Day, when they should be *waiting* at the *Gates* of *Wisdom*. O what pitty is it, that obscure Tippling-houses should pick and pilfer any one Member of a Congregation from the House of God? These profane Families do break Covenant which they made in Baptism, whereby they were Solemnly Admitted into the Church of God, Engaging to Renounce the Works of the Devil, the World and the Flesh. and to continue in the Communion of Saints, to love, fear, and worship that God, who made them for that end, and into whose Name they were Baptized, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Are not these the notorious Enemies to Christianity, whose Life is a Flat Contradiction to their Baptism? Are they not Enemies to the Church, as well as to themselves, who willfully and wickedly Excommunicate themselves from God's Ordinances? All Ungodly Families do contract the guilt of that Foul Sin of Separation by their Sabbath-breaking. For if they be for Real Membership with the Church of Christ, why do they not hold fast their Christian Profession in Publick?

Uniformity of Religion in Publick requireth Family Conformity in Divine Worship and Service in Private.

Why

Why do they not Keep their Baptiſmal Covenant, to holy and conſtant Fellowſhip with Chriſt and his Church in their Families? Why do they not ſet up Religion and Chriſtianity in their Houſes, that they might partake of Heavenly Promiſes and Bleſſings of the Spirit of Chriſt, by Prayers and Praiſes, Reading the Scriptures and Catechizing? All which Duties ſtand Obliging them, as they be the genuine and proper fruits and Evidences of that Myſtical Union and Holy Communion, which is between Chriſt and all ſound Chriſtians and Church-Members. For, He is not a good Church-man, that is not a good Chriſtian at Home. *He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that Circumciſion, which is outward in the Fleſh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and Circumciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whoſe Praiſe is not of Men, but of God*, Rom. 2. two laſt Verſes.

What profit will there be at the Day of Judgment, of Names of Chriſtians, and live like Infidels and Heathens? What? Shall God's Grace abound to us in this Age of his Church, by breaking down the Middle-Wall of Partition between *Jew* and *Gentile*, to make his Church Catholick:

And ſhall we ſet up a Partition-Wall, between God's Houſe and our own, and not permit Religion to dwell there? O let not any Profeſſor confine Religion within Church-walls, ſeeing, That the Congregation of the Faithful is made up of Believing Families, and ſeeing, That a Right Belief in the Church-Aſſembly, will bring forth the Fruits of Holineſs in thy Family. And all Parents and Maſters of Families now under the Goſpel, ought to be more Uſeful for the Spiritual concerns, of all under their Care, then thoſe Parents under the Law; And that becauſe of clearer diſcoveries, and more plentiful Effuſions of Grace. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all fleſh, and your Sons and your daughters ſhall Prophecy, your old men ſhall dream dreams, your young men ſhall ſee Viſions, alſo upon the ſervants and the handmaids, I will pour out my ſpirit*, Joel 2. 28, 29. To rule and keep Houſe, as Chriſtians, preſuppoſeth,

(1.) The [Natural] Ruling of Houſes; *i. e.* to do that which Nature dictates, namely, to Feed, Cloath, Harbour, and defend thoſe under their Charge, 2 *Cor.* 8. 21.

(2.) It

(2.) It preſuppoſeth the Ruling of Houſes in a Moral ſenſe, as Reaſon commands, *i. e.* to Govern in a deliberate way, by imparting ingenuous and vertuous Education, that Children be taught to Read, to be Juſt, Dutiful, Modeſt, Diligent, Temperate: that Servants partake of Free, not Servile Government, as Reaſonables, not as Animals, which labour in another kind; to pay Wages, not onely truly, but equally, in a fit proportion to their particular Employ. For Nature teacheth Rewards in General, but Reaſon enjoyneth an equal diſtribution of Rewards.

Therefore,

(3.) To Govern Families in a Chriſtian manner is moſt Excellent; even as Reaſon is above Senſe, and Faith above Both.

Chriſtian Family-Diſcipline, muſt Inſtruct, Correct, and Govern like it ſelf; namely, to attain unto, promote, and perſevere in all Chriſtian Duties towards God and Man, wholly devoting themſelves to [*Chriſt*] to be his Faithful Servants for ever. And this will caſt out two great Enemies to all Order, as well as Domeſtick, *i. e.* Anarchy and Tyranny. O that

Diſcipline of Chriſtian Families.

Inſtituere,
Corrigere,
Regere.

it might be conſider'd, that God will reckon with all Governours of Families, both for not Uſing and Abuſing their Talents of Authority. Then the Blind Heads of Families, who put out their own Eyes, willfully refuſing to know their Duty, both in Single and Married Life, then the Prodigal Senſualiſt, and Covetous Mammoniſt, who have wanted no knowledge of their Duty, muſt come to Account, for taking no Care for the Souls of their Children. O that Parents would conſider, whether there be any thing in this World, which deſerves their Care and Diligence more, then their own Salvation, and their ſetled and conſtant Prayers to God, for the Salvation of their Childrens Souls. O ye Parents, Would you be Bleſſings or Curſes to your Families? Would you have your Children proſper in this World, and for ever periſh in the next? Would you diſpoſe well of them here upon Earth, and not be afraid leaſt they miſs of Heaven through your Careleſsneſs? The Lord in Mercy awaken you, to ſet up Religion and Chriſtianity in your Houſes, to Inſtruct, Correct and Rule your ſelves firſt, and then your Families, as becometh Chriſtians, leaſt God's *Curſe*, denounc'd againſt Wicked Mens Houſes, purſue you here,

here, and Rest upon you for ever hereafter: The NATURE of which *CURSE* is handled in the next *CHAPTER.*

CHAP. III.

Of the CURSE *of the Lord on Wicked Houſes.*

What it is to Curſe, and what is Curſing.

TO *Curſe* (according to the General Senſe of the *Hebrew* and *Greek*) imports to Abandon, Renounce, Abdicate, and Abhor, as a Deteſtable Thing; to Excommunicate, and Caſt out of God's Church from his Ordinances, as a vile Prophane Perſon. Curſing and Execration, doth not onely ſignifie a Subſtraction of God's Bleſſing, but an Infuſion of his Curſe upon Wicked Perſons and Families, (as they have deſerved for their ſin) both in this Life, and in the Life to come.

Curſing and Bleſſing only from the Lord.

To Bleſs, is with God to make Bleſſed, and to Curſe is to make Curſed; To Say, and to Doe is all one with God, to Speak a Curſe and Inflict it, a Bleſſing and Confer it. And as it is God's peculiar to Bleſs; ſo to Curſe. *How ſhall I Curſe, whom God hath not Curſed; or, how ſhall I Defie, whom the Lord hath not Defied*, Numb. 23. 8.

No

No Heathen *Gods*, nor Evil *Spirits*, nor the *Devil* himſelf (whom they Invocate as Chief) can ſend Curſes upon any one, without Commiſſion from the Allmighty.

What it is for Wicked Houſes to be under the Curſe of God.

For Wicked Houſes to be under the Curſe of God! Is to be without his Gracious Keeping and Fatherly Care, to be obnoxious day and night to his Wrath and Vengeance for their Sins. Or thus, It is to be Excommunicated, Baniſht, and Rejected from God's Love and Saving Grace here on Earth, and hereafter to be ſhut out of Heaven. Among the *Jews* we read of, *Cutting off Souls from the Congregation*, Levit. 17, 18, 20 Chapters. This Abſciſſion, or Cutting off, denotes an Excommunicating not onely from the Priviledges of the Saints here, but from their Company in Heaven.

When *Cain* was baniſht from God's Preſence, it was not onely, an Exile to him, but an Execration upon him, as one Bereaved of his Gracious Protection and Mercy for ever. This is called by the Apoſtle, *Maranatha*, Rendred an Excommunication to Death; Or, till the Lord himſelf come to Judgment, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22.

O ſinking Families, O Houſes ſeparated to Final Deſtruction! Will it not enter into your hearts, will you not awake to conſider, That the Fire of God's Wrath is entred into your Houſes? Will you not tremble to bring God's Curſe upon you and your Children? God is angry with the Wicked every day, *Pſal.* 7. 11. *Upon the Wicked he will rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible Tempeſt, this ſhall be the portion of their cup*, Pſal. 11. 6. *Woe unto the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him*, Iſa. 3. 11.

What is meant by Wicked Houſes in Scripture.

Queſt. Who are theſe Wicked? And what do you mean by Wicked Houſes?

Anſw. Wicked Houſes are plainly deſcribed in Scripture, that none in the Neighbourhood be deceived, and that none take it to be Uncharitable, and ſo offended with what followeth.

And, (1.) Dark, Blind and Ignorant Houſes, are Wicked Houſes, Pſal. 53. 4. 2 Cor. 4. 3. Eph. 4. 18. (2.) *Houſes full of Deceit, Injuſtice, Swearing, Curſing, Lying, Sabbath-breaking, Filthy Speaking, Slandering* Jer. 7. 8, 9. Zach. 5. 3, 4. Neh. 13. 17, 18. Coloſſ. 3. 8. Pſal. 15. 3. (3.) Covetous

vetous and Oppreſſing Houſes, which have their Wiles to Entangle the Eſtates of Decaying Neighbours, which buy and ſell them for filthy gain, *Mic.* 2. 1, 2, 3. (4.) Malicious, Treacherous and Bloody Houſes, 1 *Rom.* 29. 2 *Tim.* 3. 3, 4. 2 *Sam.* 21. 1. (5.) Perſecuting Houſes (whether ſecretly or openly is all one in the ſight of God) under what pretence ſoever of Religion, colour of Law, Juſtice, and Obedience to Governours, *Acts.* 6. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Acts* 14. 5. 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 15, 16. 2 *Tim.* 4. 14, 15. (6.) Voluptuous Houſes, *Whoſe God is their Belly, whoſe Glory is their Shame, who mind earthly things*, Philip. 3. 19. (7.) Such Families as corrupt, and entice others to ſin, in Towns and Villages, *Hab.* 2. 15. (8.) Houſes of Whoredom, *Prov.* 7. *laſt.* (9.) Houſes of VVorldly Pride and Ambition, *Jeſurun*-like, waxen fat, to ſuch an Impious Greatneſs, that they forſake God that made them, and lightly eſteem the Rock of their Salvation, *Deut.* 32. 15. And, Pſal. 10. 4. *They will not ſeek after God; God is not in all their Thoughts.* (10.) Prayer-leſs Houſes, who open and ſhut their Eyes, and their Doors, without Scripture Read, or *Prayer* made all the days of the VVeek; whoſe Practice, ſaith, *What is the Allmighty that we ſhould ſerve him? And what profit ſhould*

we have, if we pray unto him? Job 21. 15. (11.) And, Laſtly, (to name no more) ſuch as have a *Form of Godlineſs, but deny the Power thereof*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. Groſs Hypocrites, *who profeſs* (in the *Creed*) *That they know God, but in Works they deny him, being abominable and diſobedient, and to every good Work Reprobate*, 1 Tit. 9. Laſt.

Now to return to the Deſcription of [*God's Curſe*] on [*Wicked Houſes*] viz.

To be Excommunicated, Baniſht, and Rejected from God's Love and Saving Grace here on Earth, and hereafter to be ſhut out of Heaven.

The Greatneſs of God's curſe on Wicked Houſes.

The Greatneſs of this Curſe is Manifeſt, in Three reſpects, *viz.*

1. In reſpect of Perſons { *Governours*, *Governed.*

2. In reſpect of Things { *Temporal*, *Spiritual.*

3. The Greatneſs of this Curſe appeareth from its Duration,

Which

Which is to { *Time* here, / *Eternity* hereafter.

1. This Curſe is extended to Perſons: And, 1. To Governours, Parents, Maſters, Guardians, Truſtees, Tutors, which Three laſt are in the room of Parents. Now all theſe, if Prophane, Careleſs, Ignorant, and Wicked Governours, are liable to God's Curſe upon their own Perſons. *Every one ſhall have as his work ſhall be*, Rev. 22. 12. *And every one ſhall bear his own Burden*, Galat. 6. 5. You that doe no Good, doe Hurt, in your Places of Truſt and Government over others; VVhat then ſhall be ſaid of ſuch Parents and Heads of Families that are ſtill doing Evil? *Every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, ſhall be cut down and caſt into the fire*, Matt. 3. 10. VVhat then ſhall be done with thoſe Trees that bring forth evil fruit? Parents ſtand bound, by their Baptiſm, to promote the Spiritual, as well as Temporal good of their Poſterity, and it were a Righteous thing with God, to Turn thoſe out of his Benediction, who have Turned Religion out of their Houſes, or never ſuffer'd it to come in. You would do nothing for God's Bleſſing upon your Family, there-

From the Extent of it on perſons Governing.

thereforeGod's Curſe is like to Fall upon you. You have Unchriſten'd your Children for want of Godly Education, and Excommunicated your Servants from God's Publick Ordinances, either ſtraitening their Chriſtian Liberty that way, or not taking care by your Pious Commands upon them, that they might enjoy it. And were it not juſt with God, to pluck off the Abuſed Cognizance of your Chriſtianity, and diſown you, as not within his Gracious Protection, nor True Members of his Church? Think upon it, and tell me what is Dear to your own Perſons; Is it any, or all of theſe particulars that I ſhall ſpeak of?

In what reſpect Governours of Families are lyable to Gods Curſe.

O all ye Parents, and all you that are in the Room of Parents,

1. Is it your Name and Reputation that is dear to you?

2. Is it Health?

3. Long Life?

4. Friends?

5. Parts and Endowments?

6. Is it your Vocation or Employment?

Or,

Or, 7. and Laſtly, Is it your Poſterity?

1. Is it your Name? A Wicked Man is loathſome, and cometh to ſhame: *But by humility and the fear of the Lord, are Riches, Honour and Life*, Prov. 13. 5, & 22. 4 If the Parents Fear God, and be faithful as Chriſtians towards their Children, their Names are Precious. Conſcience towards God and Man is the true Foundation of Honour: Where the Life is holy and righteous, the Name is ſweet and comfortable. He is an ill Husband of his Name that is a Wicked Liver at Home: And though he ſtandeth much upon his vulgar Honeſty for his Reputation, yet he acquireth no Better Name thereby, then what a Pagan or Heathen may eaſily attain unto. As for Secular Honours among Men, by Blood, Riches, Friendſhip, and Preferments, they weigh not in God's Ballance. That Man, that is a Real Chriſtian in his Family, bears the Image of his Maker, and therefore Raiſed to the Higheſt Pitch of Honour in this World: *The Righteous is more excellent then his Neighbour*, Prov. 12. 26. Tell me, can there be a greater Reproach to Heads of Families (in the beſt part of Chriſtendom) than to be Prophane and Irreligious in their Dwellings? What a Curſed ſhame is it, that thy

1. *In their Names.*

thy Houſe ſhould be an Increaſe of a Sinful Generation? that Wickedneſs ſhould Survive in thy Poſterity, when thou art turned to Duſt, and that it ſhould be alive in thy Houſe, and in Hell too? How great is thy Stain, and Stench left behind thee? What a Plague Sore is this, which neither Long-lived-Time, nor Ever-abiding Eternity can wear away? What? a Parent, a Chriſtian Parent, and yet Ungodly, Careleſs of Heaven, Covetous of the Earth, and Prodigal of thine own, as well as thy Childrens Salvation? This is to be Parent to the Bodies of thy Children, and Deſtroyer of their Souls. Let the World Honour its own with Monuments and Golden Letters, *Yet know, that the Name of the Wicked ſhall Rot*, Prov. 10. 7. What can be more for the Raiſing of thy Name (O Chriſtian Parent) then to ſerve God in thy Family; whereas Vice and Ungodlineſs is the Blot of True Honour, and Reverſe the Coat-Armour of every Dignified Perſon in our *Engliſh* Church and Kingdom. If it were poſſible to be Wicked alone, without Infecting others, it would not be ſo Infamous, as to make others to Sin, as do all Wicked Families. That *Jeroboam* made *Iſrael* to Sin is the Standing Monument of his Infamy. God threatneth *Baaſha* to make his Houſe like the Houſe of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, *i. e.* A Baſe, Ruined, and Vile Houſe,

Parens Corporum Pernicies animarum.

1 Kings

1 *Kings* 16. 3. And may not all Wicked Heads of Families fear, leaſt the Lord puniſh them and their Poſterity after them for their ſins, and make them as vile in Ages to come, as they have been wicked in times paſt?

2. Is your Health dear unto you (O ye wicked Prayer-leſs Families?) Is it better then your Goods? It is not in Mercy to wicked Men, it is lyable to God's Curſe. Thy Body (O wicked Man) is a Fair Houſe, but the Plague is in it, even the Plague of thy own Heart, 1 *King.* 8. 38. Can'ſt thou ſay from thy heart, thou art in good Health, and waſt never ſick of Sin, and never kneweſt the Phyſitian of Souls, *Mat* 9. 12? Ah! It were better that thy Bodily Health were turned into a lingring Conſumption, Palſy, Dropſy, Stone, Colick, Gout, or any painful Diſeaſe, having health in thy Soul, then to live without it, in Swearing, Curſing, Lying, Stealing, Sabbath-breaking, Pride, Covetouſneſs, Idleneſs, Uncleanneſs, Oppreſſion. Queſtionleſs there is a Secret Curſe running in the veins of an Healthy Body, which is ſpent in the Purſuit of Senſual Contentments.

2. *In their Health.*

Nuſquam pejus quam in Sano Corpore, Æger Animus habitat.

Health, the Beſt Thing, next to Grace, for want of the Bleſſing of Allmighty God,

is the Worſt Thing in the World, next to a Life in Hell.

How many give the Firſt Fruits of their Youth to Vanity and Wildneſs? How many at Ripe Age (for want of God's Grace) run out of Prodigality into Covetouſneſs, thinking to make Amends by a Thrifty Sin for an Unthrifty Life, or miſtaking Exchange of Sins, to be Amendment of Life? What Comfort in that Health which is the Undoing of the Soul to all Eternity? What Comfort in that Health, that cannot, that will not be at leaſure, nor ſpare time, nor a little of its ſtrength and vitals for Holineſs and Heaven? What Comfort in that Health, which is ſubject to the Inordinacy of Senſe, and thereby denies the Soul its Rational and Religious Liberties, for God's Worſhip, either in his Houſe, or in their own Houſes? What Comfort in that healthy Body, which is made a ſink of Sin, and ſlave to every noiſom Luſt? Certainly this Corporal Health and Strength is worſe then brutiſh, for the Beaſt Feeds, Works, Reſteth, Playeth for the benefit of Man; but a Wicked Healthy Man, is not onely an Enemy, but a Curſe to himſelf, and to all that partake with him in his Sin. And now ſpeak, What greater Curſe then thus to abuſe Corporal Health, for the ſake of which (in time

time of Sickneſs) ſo many Friends and Relations ſtand Weeping and Sighing, and ſo many Meſſengers and Doctors are employed?

VVhat a Curſe is it? VVhat an Abſurd piece of VVickedneſs and Folly, to part with That, at any vile Rate, for the Recovery of which, thou art VVilling to Have Every thing, though at the Higheſt Rate? VVhat a Curſe is it, to Sacrifice That to the Devil and the VVorld, which in Holy Baptiſm thou haſt ſolemnly Dedicated and Devoted to God's VVorſhip? VVhat a Bitter Curſe is it, to VVork out thy Damnation with that Health, wherewith God hath commanded thee to work out thy Salvation?

3. The Wicked Mans prolonged Life is a Curſe to him. *The ſinner being an hundred years old ſhall be Accurſed*, Iſa. 65. 20. As he fills his days and years, ſo he fills up the meaſure of his ſins. *His bones are full of the ſins of his youth, which ſhall go down with him into the duſt*, Job 20. 11. *Solomon* ſaith, *A wicked Man prolongeth his life in his wickedneſs*, Eccleſ. 7. 15. Such a Life will prove like it ſelf, as Heavy of Curſes as it hath made Light of Sinning. O what a miſery is it for an Old Sinner to begin to Live, when he is ready to Dye? What

3. *In* Long *Life.*

Quidam tunc incipiunt vivere cum deſivendum eſt, &c. Sen. Ep. 23.

a woefull thing is it, to find Governours of Families in their Gray Haires taking pleaſure to diſcourſe of the ſins of their youth? Doe they not hereby, recommend thoſe ſins to be committed by their children, which they, by reaſon of their Impotency, cannot commit? And is not this a ſign of God's Curſe, impending over their Families, in reſpect of Long Life? O what a Judgment is it, That Long Life is ſtill growing Riper and Riper for Deſtruction to all Eternity. *The Amorites were not cut off, becauſe their Iniquity was not yet full*, Gen. 15. 16.

O what a Curſe is it, to be an Old Gray-headed Sinner, a Swearer, Drunkard, Sabbath-breaker, Scorner of Religion! O what a ſad thing is it to ſee ſtrong ſins in feeble Age, Sins in the *Meridian* when Life is *Setting*? What a deplorable thing is it, That Goſpel-time (the moſt precious time in the World) ſhould have ever have ſuffered ſo Great a Loſs by thee, and, Thou ſo great a Puniſhment: *When the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angles, in flameing fire takeing Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*, 2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8, 9? What a miſery

a miſery is it, that thou haſt lived to ſee ſo many Goſpel-years, with Rain and Sunſhine, haſt been partaker of the Labours of God's Husbandmen, and of their Seed, and ſhould'ſt have come into the Barn as *a Shock of Corn in his ſeaſon*; yet now at laſt thou proveſt no better then a Bundle of Tares. Ah what a Curſe is it to be thus long-liv'd! Is it not a ſad Spectacle to ſee Governours of Families in Gray-haires, and without the Leaves of outward Religious Duties in their Houſes, *Matt.* 21. 19? It may be ſaid of ſuch, that they have unhappily improved the Stock of Sin, as long and as far as they could, and that a long-lived Eternity of Puniſhment is their deſert, *Matt.* 25. 41.

4. The ſweetneſs of Friends ſhall be taken from the Wicked, God withdraweth from them Spiritual, and they have no better then Carnal Friends, who are willing to pleaſe them in their ſins. Although this is accounted (in Scripture) to be Hatred to their Friends and Neighbours, Lev. 19. 17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* O what a Curſe is it, to make choice of ſuch Friends, as are hurtful to our Souls, to wit, of looſe, jovial, vain Perſons! O what a Curſe is it, to

4. *Their Friends.*

have no better Friends then ſuch as be Friends to our Sins, and Enemies to our Souls! Admit, that a Worldling, or a Looſe Liver may carry Friendly, from a Principle of common honeſty, and the Intereſt of his Reputation, yet they do not, they cannot, and (whilſt ſuch) they will not ſhew a Chriſtian Care over the Affairs of greateſt moment, namely, the Education of the Poſterity of the Deceaſed in Vertue and Piety. Compute then, what comfort a Wicked Man finds in his Friend; or, rather come and lament the Miſery of all ſuch Perſons and Families; conſidering, that for the want of this faithful Chriſtian Friendſhip and Truſt, the Children of Irreligious Worldly Families, are in apparent danger, to follow the ſteps of their Parents and Friends, and ſo perpetuate (and as it were entayl) God's Curſe upon the Houſe ſtill. How ſhould Families, in matters of Truſt for Poſterity, be careful in Chuſing Feoffees! I mean chiefly about Religion, that it may not Dye in a Pious Family of Children, when their Parents Dye. If *Seneca* eſteem'd at an high Rate, Civil or Moral Friendſhip, it teaches us to eſteem at an higher rate Chriſtian Friendſhip. * I (ſaith *Seneca*) eſteemed my

* *Non judicabam me, cum illos ſuperſtites relinquerem, mori, putabam (inquam) me victurum, non cum illis, ſed per illos*, &c. Ep. 78.

Friends

Friends ſo much my Self, that I thought my Self never Dead while they Lived; that although I lived not on Earth with them, yet being Dead I Lived by them; ſo that I ſeemed rather to Depoſit my Life (as well as my Cares) with them, then to Depart this Life. Not unlike one of our late *Engliſh Senators* Expreſſions, viz. † A Friend is far more then a Mans Self. Men have their Time, and Dye in the deſire of ſome things, which they principally take to heart, the Beſtowing of a Child, the Finiſhing of a Work, or the like. If a Man have a True Friend, he may reſt almoſt Secure, that the Care of theſe things ſhall continue after him. So that a Man hath as it were Two Lives in his Deſires.

† L. *Bacon's* Eſſays.

Obj. But *Solomon* in one place, ſaith, *That the rich hath many friends*, Prov. 14. 20. And in another, *Wealth maketh many friends*, Prov. 19. 4. What matter then, Money is my Friend, my Eſtate is my Friend.

Anſ. *Solomon*, in both places, diſcovers the Covetouſneſs and Partiality of Men in the World, who, for Advantage-ſake, ſell the Truth in Witneſs-bearing, and accept Perſons in Judgment. And who knows not how apt Men are to be drawn with Silver and Gold Twiſt. * Of all ſorts of

* *Utilis amicitia ultimum habet locum, & quas amicitias utilitas conglutinat eaſdem reſolvit.* Cic. *in* Lælia.

Amicitia non eſt, niſi inter bonos. Ibid.

Friends, Money-Friends are the worſt Friends to the Purſe, not to the Perſon. Hence it is, that if they Judge the Gift or Fee too little, then they conclude their Service and Truſt too cheap, and they will do far leſs, or quite neglect their Duty. The truth is, A Real Subſtantial Friend is the Conſcientious Man, *Neh.* 7. 2. *Daniel*, Chap. 6. 4, 5. Verſes. It is a True ſaying, *Friendſhip cannot be there, where Goodneſs is not. He that loveth pureneſs of heart, for the grace of his lips, the King ſhall be his friend*, Prov. 22. 11.

5. *Parts and Endowments.* Parts and Endowments of Wicked Men are lyable to God's Curſe; And what a ſore evil do Parents and Maſters of Families bring upon themſelves, and thoſe under their Charge hereby? What a Curſed thing is it, to have their Intellectuals poyſon'd, infatuated and corrupted, with Atheiſtical Principles, dangerous Opinions, and Damnable Practices? What a Judgment is it to have their Gold and Silver Canker'd, and their choiſeſt Endowments vitiated? Let no Wicked Perſon conclude and preſume of God's Love to him from Gifts: *Gifts no true ſign of Grace.* It is not Diſtribution, nor Receiving of Talents, but Grace to employ them well, which is an Evidence of God's Love, *Matt.* 25. 30.

What

What great pitty is it to ſee Men of Breeding and Quality in the World (whoſe Time of Education hath been as Expenſive, as the Lives of moſt Men) to ſtrip themſelves of their Ornaments, and trample upon them in the Vomit and Sink of Luxury and Surfeting? And how ſad is it afterwards (in ſtead of Ingenuity to acknowledge) to Proſtitute their Gifts and Parts to make Defences for their Enormities? Is not this Treaſon againſt Heaven, to Clip God's Coin, his Gifts, to Guild their own Droſs, their Sins, to make them Currant in the World? Namely, to call Healthing and Carouſing, Good Fellowſhip, Loyalty, or Civility; To call Swearing, Hectoring, and Duelling, Gallantry, or Manhood; to call Covetouſneſs, good Husbandry, and Prodigality, Generoſity.

Ah, What a Curſe is this, to become Panders, and Devils, to draw themſelves and others into Hell more ſecurely? Is it not Curſed for knowing Perſons to hide, extenuate and plead for Sin? Is not this to Juſtify that which Chriſt came to Condemn, than which what is more vile and abominable? *Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs, that put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter*, Iſa. 5. 20. *Theſe are wiſe to do evil, but to do good have no knowledge,*

ledge, Jer. 4. 22. *The light of the body is the eye, therefore when thine eye is ſingle, thy whole body is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body is full of darkneſs. Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkneſs*, Luke 11. 34, 35.

6. *Their Vocation and Employments.*

6. The very Works of Wicked Mens Callings are lyable to God's Curſe.

1. His Natural Actions, when he eateth or drinketh, he feeds a Body of ſin, and *maketh proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof. Every creature of God is good*, &c. *It is ſanctifyed by the Word and Prayer*, 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. The fruit of his *Body* is curſed, &c. *Deut.* 28. 18.

2. His Civil Actions, The *Ploughing* of the Wicked is ſin, *Prov.* 21. 4. He is curſed in the *City*, and in the *Field*, Deut. 28. 16. His *Buying* and *Selling* is curſed, His *Building* and *Planting*, Deut. 28. 30.

3. To be ſure his Religious Actions are no better. *The Prayers of the wicked are abomination to God*, Prov. 15. 8. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer ſhall be abomination*, Prov. 28. 9.

2. God's

2. God's Curſe is extended to Perſons Governed in Wicked Houſes. In the Second Commandment, Exod. 20. 5. *Viſiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, And ſhew mercy*, &c. And God juſtly puniſheth Wicked Parents, and Wicked Children of Wicked Parents. There be many inſtances hereof in Scripture, both in private Perſons and Families, and in whole Kingdoms and Churches, *Ahab* and his Houſe, *Jeroboam* and his Poſterity, 2 *Kings* 9. 7, 8, 9. compared with the 1 *Kings* 14. 10, 11. *Gehazi* and his Seed, 2 *Kings* 5. laſt. The *Egyptians* were plagued in their Firſt-born, *Exod.* 11. 5, 6. The *Jews* and their Children are under the Wrath of God to this day, *Matt.* 27. 25. 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 16. The Wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermoſt. *Asban*'s Sin brought puniſhment upon himſelf and Family, *Joſhua*, Chap. 7. Yea, all *Iſrael* fares the worſe for his ſin. *And there were three years Famine in the end of Davids time, for Saul and his bloody Houſe*, 2 Sam. 21. 1, 2.

2. *God's Curſe extended to Perſons Governed.*

How this may conſiſt with the Juſtice of God, Is thus Reſolved, (1.) † The Puniſhments which God bringeth upon the Children for the Fathers ſins, are onely Temporal and Outward Puniſhments. *Some-

† *A great Queſtion Anſwer'd in many Particulars*

* *See Biſhop* Sanderſon's *Three Sermons*, ad pop. p. 372, 373, &c. 380, &c.

times

times they are ſmitten with Infectious Diſeaſes, as *Gehazies* Poſterity; ſome come to untimely ends, as *Ammon* and *Abſalon*, and the little Children of *Dathan* and *Abiram*. Poſterity may fare better or worſe, for the Vertues, or Vices of their Anceſtors, *i.e.*. Outwardly and Temporally, but Spiritually and Eternally they do not: For as never yet any Man went to Heaven for his Fathers Goodneſs, ſo not to Hell for his Fathers Wickedneſs. (2.) Children moſt times tread in their Fathers Steps, and continue in their Sins, and ſo draw upon themſelves their Puniſhments. Certain it is, that moſt times ſins paſs along from the Father to the Son, and ſo downward, by a kind of Lineal Deſcent from Parents to Children, whole Families being tainted with the ſpecial Vices of their Stock; either by Nature, Example, or Education. *Therefore Parents ought to beware of Conſtitution-Sins in themſelves, which follow the predominant humours of their Bodies and Souls, and of ſhewing bad Examples for want of good Education. If we ſhould obſerve ſome Families for ſeveral Generations Deſcending, we may ſee Whole Generations of Ryotous, Drunkards, Swearers, Sabbath-breakers, Worldlings, Perſecutors, Oppreſſors, Unclean and Filthy Perſons, Superſtitious and Idolatrous

** Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit nos nequiores; mox daturos progeniem vitiosiorem.*

latrous Families, and ſuch like. And thus the Curſe of God deſcends upon Poſterity. (3.) It is to be noted (for our better underſtanding, how juſtly God puniſheth Children for ſins of Wicked Parents and Governours) that between Head and Members, Governours and Governed (whether in Kingdoms, or Churches, or Families) there is ſuch an Union; that whereas we look upon them ſeverally, they are but One, as One Body, Magiſtrates are Civil Fathers, Miniſters are Eccleſiaſtical, and Parents of Families (over and beſides) are Natural Fathers. Now, where there is Union, there is Communion, ſuited to the Relative State of Things and Perſons, in reſpect of Rewards and Puniſhments. The whole Perſon of Man is Puniſh'd for one part, Tongue or Hand; for, as they Act for the Whole, ſo they make it obnoxious. And ſo it is with Magiſtrates and Rulers, in reſpect of thoſe under Government. For, as in the Body Natural, there is a Locomotive Faculty, guided and commanded by Superior Principles of Senſe and Reaſon, to go forth and bring home thoſe things which are ſuitable to it: So in every Body Politick, there are Inferiour Inſtruments guided by Superiour Powers, which, by doing their part in an Evil Work, whether in their own Perſons, or in their Repreſentatives,

tives, become guilty, and ſo lyable to puniſhment. (4.) Obſerve, That *Achan*'s ſin was publickly and ſolemnly prohibited, and the Puniſhment threatened fully known to all of his Family, in which, if there were Infants, or Children ſhort of years of Diſcretion, yet they cannot be ſaid to ſuffer unjuſtly, becauſe of that natural contagion of ſin drawn from the Loines of their Parents, and becauſe of ſome actual ſins committed. (5.) In Anſwer, This Puniſhment, which involved the Poſterity of *Achan*, ought not to be lookt upon ſo properly the Puniſhment of Children, as the Puniſhment of Parents, becauſe the ſuffering of Children, (being ſo near and dear to them) rendered this Diſpenſation more notable and exemplary to all *Iſrael*, and ſmart and afflictive to *Achan*, which was the intent of it. (6.) God ſometimes turns that into a Fatherly Chaſtiſement, which was a Puniſhment in the Predeceſſor. Innocent Poſterity ſometimes ſuffers for Guilty Anceſtors, but ſuch Viſitations may have kindneſs in them. (7.) We muſt beware of queſtioning God's Judicial * Proceedings, or examining them by our own Meaſures, of Mans Reaſon, Laws, or Tribunals.

* *Judicia Dei occulta ſunt nulla injuſta.*

And now having, in Seven Particulars, ſhewed; That it is conſiſtent with the Juſtice

ſtice of God to puniſh Poſterity for Predeceſſors ſins, with Temporal Puniſhments; let all Parents take heed of ſhewing Evil Examples to their Children, of Swearing, Curſing, Sabbath-breaking, Cheating, Stealing, Oppreſſing, Coveting, leaſt they, by following their ſteps (as they are in danger) ſuffer Eternal Judgments. O let all Parents beware, of Breaking their Baptiſmal-Covenant, and cauſing their Children to break it, thereby undoing themſelves and their Children to all Eternity, unleſs Mercy prevent them.

2. The Curſe of God on Wicked Houſes, falleth upon Things as well as Perſons. Things are Two-fold,

1. *Temporal.*
2. *Spiritual.*

} Which are in order to Eternal.

2. *General Thing, the Extent of God's curſe on Things* { Temporal, piritual.

1. On Things Temporal. God is highly diſpleaſed when he puniſheth ſinners with Proſperity. The Rich Mans full Table, ſerved up with his Muſick and Songs; *Soul, Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink and be merry*, could not make way for his comfortable departure out of this World: But God ſaid to him, *Thou fool, this night thy Soul ſhall be*

be requered of thee, then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided, Luke 12. 19, 20? Let it not ſeem ſtrange, that Wicked Families proſper in the World, and encreaſe in Riches, and yet be Curſed in their *basket* and their *ſtore*, Houſes, Lands, Livings, Cattel, Corn, in City and Countrey. We may not judge of comfort in Temporal Things, from the Quantity thereof. *A Mans life conſiſteth not in the Abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth*, Luke 12. 15. * Look not at the Gift ſo much, as the Good Will of the Giver, not at the Bulk, but at the Bleſſing. *In the revenues of the Wicked is trouble*, Prov. 15. 6. What profit or pleaſure in that abundance which will not ſuffer the Rich to ſleep? And what comfort to Feaſt and Surfet thereby? *A little that a righteous man hath, is better then the riches of many wicked*, Pſal. 37. 16. † If it were poſſible, that all the Delights of Men did run into the Wicked Man's Ciſtern, yet a Frown from God's offended Countenance would make all bitter to him. The Hand-Writing ſet before Carouſing *Belſhazzar*, made him Aſtoniſht, and his Heart ſunk in the height of his Mirth. What made *Cains* Countenance fall, the Second Man, and Heir Apparent to the World? Was it not becauſe, God had not reſpect to him,

him and to his Offering, *Gen.* 4. 5. If we come nearer, and view the Wicked Man's Life in his Wealth and Proſperity, we ſhall find him obnoxious to God's Curſe in Temporal Things,

Three Things bring God's Curſe upon Temporals.

1. By his Deſire.
2. By his Uſe.
3. And his value of Riches.

1. By his Inordinate Deſire, which, as it is without Meaſure, ſo it is without Content with his Condition. It is an Heatheniſh temper to be ſet upon the World. It wants neither Sin nor Miſery to haſt to be Rich. *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a ſnare*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. *And he that haſteth to be rich, hath an evil eye, and conſidereth not that poverty ſhall come upon him*, Prov. 28. 22. What a Curſe is it to make the Mammon of this World a Chriſtians God? Ah what a Curſe is this Projecting for thick Clay, and wearying himſelf for very vanity, *Habb.* 2. 6. 13. What a Curſe is it, to be a Friend of the World, and the Enemy of God, *James* 4. 4? What a Curſe is it to prefer the Creature before the Creator, things ſeen before unſeen, Temporal before Eternal, the Body be-

Inordinate Deſire of Riches.

Sed quæ reverentia legum, quis me ius pudor eſt unquam properantis avari. Juv. Sat. 14.

fore the Soul, and Earth before Heaven? Were it not juſt with God to diſinherit all theſe Worldlings of True Happineſs, who place it here below?

2. *The Uſe of Riches.*

Wicked Men are neither well full nor faſting, they provoke God, not onely in Deſiring, but in Uſing, and Having Riches. The truth is, Wicked Men do not uſe Riches, but their Riches uſe them: And how? why for Wantonneſs, Luxury, Pride, Oppreſſion, Pleaſures, Ryot, or Oſtentation. Thus that which God appointed to Help, Maintain, and countenance Vertue and Piety (among Men and Chriſtians) is uſurped to cheriſh and entertain Vice and Ungodlineſs, to prefer themſelves to high Places, and make room for them in the World to commit greater ſins. Whereas Riches are the Servants of Good Men, they are the Maſters of Wicked Men. The good Man maketh his Riches ſubordinate to the Glory of God; but the Wicked Man is in ſervitude, to the Luſts of the Eleſh, the luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life. Wicked Men (in the ſight of God) have not a Sanctified right to theſe Temporal Things, while they are out of Chriſt. And altho' they have an Indulgence, from the common Bounty of Divine Providence, to uſe Temporals and become Rich, yet they want a comfortable Title to them. And what

Apud me divitiæ aliquem locum habent apud te ſummum: Ad poſtremum divitiæ meæ ſunt, tu divitiarum es. Sen. de Beat. Vita. cap. 22.

what comfort in the Having, or in Uſing of theſe Temporals, without the Grace and Bleſſing of God? Is it not a Sign of God's Wrath and Curſe upon Mens Houſes and Families, when they ſuffer the World to Lord it over their Conſciences, Time, Education, Office, Reaſon, Souls and Bodies and all. When the World hath Mens Knees, Prayers, Oaths, Strength, Wit, Parts, Memory, when the Love of the World hath ſeiſed on God's Worſhip, Sabbaths, Ordinances, and Miniſtry, Is there not a Curſe upon ſuch abuſed Riches? Is it not a ſign of God's Diſpleaſure, when the World uſurps Power over Spiritual and Heavenly things? Is not this the Fruit of the Forbidden Tree, *Gen.* 2. 17. compared with, *Chap.* 3. 17? Every Good Man maketh uſe of his Riches, as *Joſhua* did of the *Gibeonites*, makes them *hewers of wood, and drawers of water, for the Houſe of God*, Joſhua 9. 23. When as Wicked Men prefer the World to chief honour, as *Ahab* did *Benhadad*, who cauſed him to come up to his Chariot, 1 *Kings* 20. 33. O what a ſad account is every Wicked Man like to make? How will his abuſed Riches riſe up in Judgment againſt him? Many were his coſtly ſins which he maintained, many needleſs Viſits, many Chargeable Curioſities and Fancies, many extravagant and uncomely

The Abuſe of Riches.

Faſhions in Apparel, in Meats and Drinks; all which are followed, attended and waited on with many Temptations to Wantonneſs, and many more Vices, potent Enemies to the Life of Nature, and much more to a Moral and Chriſtian Life. But what little good hath this Wicked Rich Man done to Church or State, to Strangers or Relations, or to his own Family, where Charity ſhould begin? Have not Wicked Families (of no ſmall quality) *Adopted* their *ſins* (as Ryot, Oppreſſion, Pride, Covetouſneſs, Uncleanneſs) to *Inherit* their *Eſtates*, and *Diſinherit* their *Poſterity*? Where there is more Wealth, without more Grace to manage this encreaſe, it will prove a Curſe in ſtead of a Bleſſing. Therefore our Saviour exhorts, *To make to our ſelves Friends of the Unrighteous Mammon*, Luke 16. 9. *i. e.* to get Grace to uſe Riches to the honour of God, not to maintain Intemperance and Ungodlineſs. For the Day is coming, when God will ſummon all ſuch Perſons and Families to give an account of their large portion of Worldly things, and miſimprovement thereof, *Luke* 16. 11. *Hoſ.* 2. 8. 9. Riches are abuſed one of theſe two ways, They are either *Over-valued*, or *Under-valued*; the *Covetous* are guilty of the one, and the *Prodigal* of the other ſin.

ſin. And this brings me to the next Particular, *viz.*

3. And Laſtly; Wicked Men provoke God to Curſe them for the Value they make of Riches: God placed Man over thoſe Sublunary things, and now ſinful contemptible Man, will ſtoop as low as Hell for them. How ſtrangely are Men Infatuated, to Dote upon Dirt and Droſs! Who would think that a Reaſonable Creature, placed his Happineſs on Thick Clay, on Wind, on that which is not, *Habb.* 2. 6. *Eccl.* 5. 16. *Prov.* 23. 5. Yet ſo we find it, *Luke* 12. 19. *Soul, Soul, take thine eaſe*, &c. To place God and the Creature in the ſame Rank and Order, and to Worſhip the Creature joyntly with the Creator, is no leſs ſin, then Idolatry; but to ſet the Creature above the Creator is Atheiſm. If this were not ſo, the Worlds Trinity would not have ſo many Votaries and Sacrifices of Souls and Bodies. How can ſuch Men and Women as theſe be in God's Favour? Can that Man or Family have the Bleſſing of God upon them and theirs, which bow down to the Gods of Silver and Gold? Ah, What is Man without Divine Grace? How ſenſual, how baſe, how brutiſh in choice and affection? This Rate which Carnal and Earthly Men ſet

3. *The value of Riches.*

Sad Effects of over valuing this World.

ſet on Temporal Things, openeth a wide door to all manner of ſin, Bribery, Oppreſſion, Diſſembling, Lying, Perjury, Flattery, Oppreſſive Tyrannical Law-Suits, Temporizing, and Unhappy Diſpoſing of Children, to Services, to Trades, to Preferments, and to Marriages.

2. *Wicked Men and their Houſes lyable to God's Curſe in Spiritual Things.*

But is this all? Nō, worſe is behind; for, Wicked Men, and their Families, are ſubject to God's Curſe, not onely in Temporal Things, but in Spiritual Things, that is, when they perform the Outward Duties of Religion; As Prayer, Hearing the Word, coming to the Sacrament, Reading God's Word, Reading Good Books, and Conference about matters of Religion.

In reſpect of Prayer.

1. When Wicked Men Pray: Their Prayers are an Abomination; He that turneth away his Ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer ſhall be an Abomination, *Prov.* 28. 9. *The Sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, but the Prayer of the upright is his delight*, Prov. 15. 8.

That the Actions of Wicked Men, whether Natural, Civil, or Religious, are obnoxious to God's Curſe, hath been mention'd before, Under another Head, namely [The Vocation or Employments of Wicked Men.]

Now

Now, as to the Matter in hand, concerning outward Religious Works, of Unregenerate Men, whether publick upon the Lord's Day, or private in the Family; take notice of theſe following Particulars, to prevent miſtakes, leaſt any harden their hearts in Omiſſion of outward Duties.

1. That thoſe Perſons ſin more, who Pray not at all in their Houſes, then ſuch as make Prayer. It is better to do that which is Materially Good, then that which is both Materially and Formally Evil. It is better to have a Form of Worſhip and Religion, then Atheiſtical Prophaneneſs. It is better to have Leaves of Profeſſion, then nothing but the Curſed Fruits of a Corrupt Tree. It is more Eligible (*ex natura rei*) to exerciſe Common Gifts and Operations of the Spirit, and ſome Feeling in the Conſcience, than to be Barren of All Gifts, and Dead to all outward Duties of Religion, Iſa. 43. 23. Amos 5. 25. *Thou haſt not brought me the ſmall Cattel of thy burnt-offerings*, &c. *Have ye offered unto me ſacrifice and offerings*, &c?

2. That God is pleaſed to Reward, with Temporal Bleſſings, ſuch as Pray, and Humble themſelves for their ſins, though they be not true Believers, and ſincere therein.

God is pleaſed to Encourage all ſort of ſinners to obſerve and ſet up Outward Duties of Religion, and they ſhall fare the Better. It is not without Reward to perform ſome Formalities of Worſhip, though done in Hypocriſy, 1 Kings 21. 29. *Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf before me*, &c. Here is a Great Temporal Mercy given to *Ahab* during his Life [*I will not bring the evil in his days.*]

3. Conſider, That none be hardened in their Omiſſion of the Externals of Religion: I ſay, let them know, That ſin is in the Perſon, before it Infect the Performance; In the Subject, before it corrupt the Action. Therefore let the blame be laid where it ought, not upon Religion, nor the Duties thereof, but upon the Profeſſor and his bad Life.

4. Seeing the condition of Unregenerate and Wicked Men, is ſo contagious, that it pollutes all their Outward Religious Actions, let them make haſt to get

out

out, by the uſe of all means of God's appointment, in order to their Converſion: As by Prayer, Hearing the Word, Reading the Word, Reading Good Books, and, by Good Company, as before-mentioned. For although the Prayers of the Wicked and Unregenerate be unpleaſing to God, yea, an abomination, yet it is their Duty to Pray, that they may be turned from their Wicked ways, that ſo their Perſons and Performances, may find acceptance through Chriſt.

O let all ſorts of Prayer-leſs Families Pray, that they may Pray in Faith, and that they may become ſincere, and down-right Chriſtians. If you have any Bowels of Compaſſion for your own Souls, and the Souls of your Children, get out of the Curſed Condition of Wicked Men. Who would lead a Wicked Life, if he were ſenſible of his Miſery, and the Curſe of God upon the Houſe of the Wicked?

2. Wicked Men are ſubject to Gods Curſe, In hearing the Word. They are the bad ground, which receiveth ſeed among Thorns and Briers, *Such Earth as beareth Thorns and Briers is rejected and nigh unto Curſing, whoſe end is to be burned*, Heb. 6. 8. As they

2. *In reſpect of Hearing the Word.*

they come unprepared to hear, ſo they depart without profit. The fault is not in the Seed but in the ground, which receiveth it. The life of the Wicked is compared to untilled, rough, thorny, fallow ground, *Jer.* 4. 3. What Fruit can be expected from it, How can the Seed of the word and a wicked heart agree? Who would live in the condition of a wicked Man? Who trembleth not, to be under Gods Ordinances without a bleſſing; what heart dreads not to be ſubject to Gods Curſe? Who would not be afraid to hear the bleſſing pronounc'd, and have no ſhare in it? Come then to the word for Grace, to make thee a New-man, to reform thy wicked courſe of Life. Come to *Bethesda*, there is hope of thy cure, of thy converſion, though thou haſt a long time been in this caſe. If thou art willing to be made whole, if thou art willing to become a New Creature, the work will be done, *Jo.* 5. 6. Let nothing hinder or diſcourage thee becauſe of thy wickedneſs, or being Obnoxious to Gods Curſe in hearing the word, but let it much more perſwade and quicken thee, to a conſtant and conſcionable attendance upon the word. There is hope of Grace in the uſe of means of Grace, but by refuſing the means, thou art ſure to Periſh. Take up then ſuch a

like

like reſolution, as the *Lepers* before *Samaria* did, 2 *Kings* 7. 3, 4. *And there were four Leprous Men at the entring in at the Gate, and they ſaid one to another, Why ſit we here until we dye,* &c? *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts,* &c. *Iſa.* 55. 7.

3. Wicked and Unconverted Men are lyable to Gods Curſe in Reading the Holy Scriptures, and good Books. For they are in the dark, and without faith the Eye of the Soul. They have Eyes and ſee not, they have Ears and hear not. They want a right End, Gods Glory, the good of their own Souls, and of their Family, whereunto God hath commanded his word and good Books to be read in Families, *Deut.* 6. 1, 2, 3, &c. 3. *In reading Gods word and good Books.*

Particularly, Wicked Men deprive themſelves of Gods Bleſſing in reading his word and good Books, 1. For want of Prayer to God for it, *Pſal.* 119. 18. *Open thou mine Eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy Law.* It may be that ſome Wicked Men are of good Natural Parts to diſcourſe of Religion; But what is that without Grace in the heart, to reliſh the Spiritual matters thereof? What is a *Golden Head* and a *Stony Heart*? 2. By reaſon of Ignorance, *The Natural Man, receiveth not the*

the things of the Spirit of God, &c. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. 3. Wicked Men in reading Gods word, and good Books are upon uncertainties, for they fix upon no Duty, they are all in Generals for want of the applying Act of Conscience. They as Men read Maps of Forreign Countries, without Knowledge of the Globes. 4. Wicked Men expose themselves to Gods Curse in Reading Scripture and good Books, by converting their Knowledge into empty discourse or unprofitable Disputes. And what more vain and carnal in these Opinionative times? What *Lipsius* said of his Countrey-men, is as true of our selves, *i. e. Never any Age more abounding with Religions, and Barren of Piety.* We have cause to fear, that Interest is the Religion of many Professors, whereunto they sacrifice their Cares, and all their Abilities, *Acts* 19. 28. *Great is* Diana *of the* Ephesians. Ah, what confusions have Opinions wrought amongst us in *England.* And, no wonder, seeing they Lodge in that Wild and Restless faculty of the Soul, Namely, Imagination, from whence all perturbations of Church and State proceed.

Seculum quo nullum anquam feracius Religionum fuit, Sterilius Pietatis. Lipsius De Const. Ep. ad Lect.

4. 4. Hereunto in the last place, may be added, Friendly and Neighbourly Reproof

In receiving friendly Reproof and Advice.

and

and Advice, which (though it be the beſt of Chriſtian Charity, *Levit.* 19. 17.) Is made the worſt uſe of by Wicked Men.

1. They either make a mock of it. Or,

2. Snuff at it as a piece of Cenſoriouſneſs and Impertinency. Or,

3. Count their Friend their Enemy, and at the next meeting can hardly afford him an Ordinary Salutation. This is the Curſed condition of wicked Men, even in reſpect of ſpiritual things. *He that reproveth a ſcorner, getteth to himſelf ſhame, and he that rebuketh a Wicked Man, getteth himſelf a blot*, Prov. 9. 7.

3. The Third Thing in opening the former Deſcription of Gods Curſe on wicked Men, is the extent of it, in reſpect of the Duration of it, which is, 1. To Time here, 2. To Eternity hereafter.

3. *General. Gods Curſe is extended to Time here, And to Eternity hereafter.*

1. To Time here, in all the fore-mentioned particulars, with relation had to Perſons, Governours and Governed, and to things Temporal and Spiritual, with many particulars under both Heads. I come to ſpeak of the latter part of the Duration of the Curſe of God on wicked Men,

Men, which is extended to Eternity hereafter. There is not a day free, nor an hour (ſo long as they be out of Chriſt) from the juſtly deſerved Curſe; *God is angry with the Wicked every Day*, Pſal. 7. 11. *Upon the Wicked he ſhall rain ſnares, Fire and Brimſtone, and an horrible Tempeſt, this is the Portion of their Cup*, Pſal. 11. 6. Who could ſleep quietly in his Bed, with a drawn Sword hanging over his Head by a twine thread? But ah, poor Creatures, Hell Fire (for ought they know) is kindling for them; while they are Treaſuring up unto themſelves wrath againſt the Day of wrath, and while they ſay, *Peace and Safety, ſudden deſtruction is coming upon them*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 3. But is this the worſt of their miſery? Can it end with time, can Death and the Grave put an end to it? No, no, Evil purſueth ſinners; The Curſe is extended to Eternity. O woeful State of Wicked Families! O that they would conſider of it, before they come out of the Low Ebb of Time, into the vaſt Ocean of Eternity!

The Extreme Malediction.

2. Therefore, this Curſe is extended to the longeſt line of Eternity. This is the amazing ſentence full of horrour; *Depart ye Curſed into Everlaſting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41. Will not this

this word [*Eternity*] pierce the hardeſt heart? Will it not awaken the moſt preſuming ſinner, out of the [*Mare Mortuum*] or Dead Sea of Security? O the dreadful thoughts of Eternity, Eternity in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimſtone! Eternity is not made up of Millions of Years. You may as ſoon Gird the expanded Heavens, or Drink up the *Ocean*, as Meaſure Eternity. Which made one cry out, *What years can ſotiate endleſs Eternity.* Men would not live in their Houſes as they do, if they did truly believe, That (*except they repent*) Gods Curſe, after this wicked life is ended, will abide upon them for ever, *Rom. 6. Laſt. The wages of ſin is Death, but the Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, i. e. Of ſin Indefinitely taken, any ſort of ſin, every ſin, unrepented of.

Quibus annis poteſt ſaturari æternitas, cui nullus eſt finis? Lact. lib. 1. Cap. 12.

Queſt. *But ſinful Man's time upon Earth, is but for a while that he ſins, compared to Eternity. Why ſhould he ſuffer Infinite and Eternal Puniſhment, for Finite and Temporary ſins?*

Anſw. Sin and Puniſhment may be conſidered three ways.

1. In

1. In reſpect of themſelves.

2. In reſpect of Duration.

3. In reſpect of their Object.

1. In reſpect of themſelves. Sin conſidered in it ſelf, as it is a Privation of Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, is finite not Infinite, becauſe that Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, wherein *Adam* was at the firſt Created, was Finite ſuitable to the Creature. And Puniſhment conſidered in it ſelf [*Intenſive*] is Finite; But if Puniſhment be conſidered [*Extenſive*] it is Infinite; that is to ſay, Puniſhment for its *Entity* (or its *Being*) is Finite: And for its Duration in that *Being*, It is Infinite; Or, thus in ſhort, Sin is of Infinite Continuance in Hell, and Its Puniſhment is Anſwerable. Were the life of ſinful Men prolonged for ever upon Earth, they would ſin for ever; The guilt and filth of ſin deſcends into Hell with the Impenitent, and the Damned are ever Living and ever Sining, therefore it is Juſt, that their Puniſhment run Paralel with their ſining.

2. In

2. In reſpect of Duration, ſin and puniſhment may be conſidered, and in this reſpect they both are Infinite, *i. e.* the malignity, emnity and contrariety of ſin to God's purity and goodneſs remaineth for ever, and the puniſhment is inflicted for ever. Gods word hath placed Rewards and Puniſhments one againſt another, *Mat.* 25. *Laſt, And theſe ſhall go into everlaſting Puniſhment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal. The wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* As *Rewards* are Eternal, ſo *Puniſhments* are Eternal, As Life is Eternal, ſo Death is Eternal. By the Rule of Contraries theſe Illuſtrate one another.

3. Sin and Puniſhment are conſidered in reſpect of the Object, or againſt whom ſin is committed, *i. e.* againſt the Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, the ſupreme Lawgiver, of Infinite Juſtice and Holineſs. Sin in this reſpect may be ſaid to be Infinite, being the Tranſgreſſion of the Law of an Infinite Majeſty. For more full Anſwer to this Queſtion.

1. Observe, That although Mans Time of sinning be but short compared to Eternity of suffering, yet this doth not appertain to the Nature of sin, being [*Extrinsecal*] to it, for the sin of Apostate Angels, presently after the Commission, was in it self, (*abstractively* taken, for that Malicious defection and deformity from the chief Good) as hateful and contrary to God, as it was afterwards and farther on. In like manner, the sin of our first Parents, deserved Eternal Punishment, the very first Day, as well as in future time. The Reason hereof is this, We ought in this matter enquire into the Moral Evil, Internal principles, and roots of sin, the formality of it, emnity, privation, separation, and aversation from Mans chief end, the enjoyment of God himself, the *Being* of *Beings*, and Fountain of Happiness.

2 *Quest.* 2. Quest: *But seeing that there be some that dye in their Infancy, some in their Childhood, others in Youth, ripe Age, old Age. And seeing there be Greater and Lesser sins, as they admit of aggravations, against the Light of Nature, and against the Gospel, How can it*

it be ſaid that they ſuffer Juſtly, in caſe all ſuffer Eternally?

Anſw. Puniſhment hereafter, is proportionable to Wicked Mens ſins committed in this Life, and all ſorts ſhall have their Juſt Deſerts. Chriſt Jeſus the Judge of all the World, will reward every one according to his work, *Mat.* 16. 27. *The Anſwer.*

The greater and leſſer ſins, ſhall have greater and leſſer Puniſhment, but all ſhall have Eternal Puniſhment. There are Degrees of Puniſhment in Hell, as of ſinning on Earth, but Eternity of ſuffering is the Portion of all.

The leaſt ſin deſerveth Eternal Death. [There are not Phyſical Degrees in this Death; There is no *Diminution* in Infiniteneſs, nor *Brevity* in Eternity].

O let every Wicked Man be upon his Knees, and pray for true faith in Chriſt and Repentance of his ſins, let him give no ſleep to his Eyes, nor ſlumber to his

Eye-Lids till he partake of the Mercy of God, and Infinite merits of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who alone delivereth, from this dreadful wrath to come, 1 *Thess.* 1. 10.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Pernicious Influence of the Sins of Wicked Families, upon this Church and Kingdom, from ſeven Aggravations.

1. THere was never any Nation well and peaceably Governed, in the which Religion, and a Perſwaſion of a Divine Providence, was not well and ſoundly planted in the minds of Men. And the more that any one was privately devoted to Religion, and the Reverencing of a Divine Spirit, the more Illuſtrious and Famous he became in all innocency and probity of Life. As the ſecret Atheiſm of Mens Judgments, ſo the known Atheiſm of their Practiſe, opens the Door to all Wickedneſs, Injuſtice, Pride, Perjury, Tyranny, Sacriledge, or any other Villany, *Pſal.* 14. 1, 2, &c. Titus 1. *Laſt. They profeſs they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* It is obſervable, that the Book called the

1. *Aggravation of Family Impiety. It depopulates Kingdoms. Sir W. R. Ghoſt.*

[*Practiſe of Piety*] was Dedicated to King *Charles* the Firſt, then Heir Apparent of theſe Kingdoms; Intimating, that, true Religion, is, the beſt Crown Imperial, the undoubted Glory and Safety of Church and State. Wiſdom is better then Weapons of War, but one ſinner deſtroyeth much good, *Eccleſ.* 9. *Laſt.* The good of the Commonalty depends upon the Exerciſe of Religion. If thou haſt true Loyalty in thy heart, live with an Awe of Religion in thy Family, the want whereof will render thee unjuſt abroad, as well as at home. Thoſe that are without Devoted Service to God, will not be ſubject to Rulers for Conſcience ſake.

Una cuſtodia Pietas. Char. of Wiſdom.

He that is ſubject only upon the account of wrath, and the Power of the Sword which is over him, will be no longer ſo, when he hath an opportunity of eſcaping or reſiſting that Power. Nor is there any poſſible way, to ſecure Men in their quiet ſubjection and obedience, but by their being obliged for Conſcience ſake. And therefore ſuch kind of Perſons as by their open profaneneſs and contempt of Religion, do endeavour to deſtroy Conſcience from amongſt Men, may juſtly be eſteemed, as the worſt kind of ſeditious Perſons, and moſt pernicious to civil Government.

Bp. Wilkins *Sermon before the King* 1670.

Was

Was it not hence, that the *Roman Empire* ſuffered ſo much, namely, from their *Cateline*, *Brutus*, *Caſſius*, *Sylla*, *Marius*, and ſuch like wicked fellows? Righteouſneſs exalts a Nation, but ſin is a reproach to any People, *Prov.* 14. 34. It is the obſervation of *Joſephus* in his *Antiquities*, that the *Jews* were grown very prophane and careleſs of Religion, before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by the *Romans*. The Lord hath a controverſy with the Inhabitants of the Land, *Becauſe there is no Truth, nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land. By Swearing and Lying, and Killing and Stealing, and Committing Adultery, they break out, and Blood toucheth Blood. Therefore ſhall the Land mourn and every one that dwelleth therein*, &c. Hoſ. 4. 1, 2, 3. The abominable wickedneſs of *Canaan*, provoked the Lord to viſit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the Land vomitted out her Inhabitants. Ye ſhall therefore keep my Statutes and my Judgments, *&c.* That the Land ſpue not you out alſo, when ye defile it, *&c. Levit.* 18. 25, 26, 27, 28. Perſonal ſins quickly become Popular, and as ſin goeth not alone, ſo it goeth not without its Contagion: It is a Plague, and infects others when we ſee them not, it is as diffuſive as the air which we breath in. There is much dan-

Bp. Hall, *In a Sermon at* Hampton Court, *before King* James *the Firſt.* 1624.

ger in a Contagious Converſation. One perſon infects a Family, one Family a whole Street, One Street a whole City, One City a whole Countrey, One Countrey a whole World. If ſin begin with one *Angel* it infects *Legions*, If with one *Woman*, it inſerts all the Maſs of *Mankind.* Thou ſitteſt at home, and thinkeſt that thou doeſt no hurt to the Kingdom or Church, but ſure it is, that thy Family-ſins will abroad, and as its ſaid of thoſe that are infected with Plague ſores, ſo it may be ſaid of ſinners, that they ſtrive to infect others. Sin never goeth alone whether conſidered as Criminal or Penal.

Thy Sabbath-breaking, Idleneſs, Pride, Prodigallity, Backbiting, Drunkenneſs, Coveteouſneſs, and ſuch like, breed more ſins firſt at home, then in thy Neighbours Houſe, then afterwards, both thou thy ſelf, thy untoward poſterity and thy corrupted Neighbours, carry them into Company, in Villages, Market Towns and Cities, and in proceſs of time, the whole Land where thou liveſt, is defiled thereby. This fire of Family ſins, being once kindled, finds more fewel among ſinful Men, and ſo going from one to another, at laſt, it breaks forth into conſuming Flames. A whole Tribe was corrupted with Idolatry, which firſt came from *Micha*'s Family, *Judges* 17,

and

and 18, *Chapters.* *Achan*'s ſin brought God's hand, not only upon himſelf and Family, but all *Iſrael* ſmarts for it, *Joſh.* 7. 13. And a long time after, *Achan* is called the [Troubler of *Iſrael*] 1 *Chron.* 2. 7. But eſpecially the Families of Great Perſons, as of Princes, Magiſtrates, Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, bring Judgments upon whole Nations and Countries. As in *Saul*'s time, *Jeroboam*'s, *Baaſha*'s, *Ahaz*'s, and *Manaſſeh*'s time. The ſins of *Nobility*, and *Gentry*, are of a more ſpreading Infection, then the ſins of Inferior Perſons. And as to the Contagion of the ſins of the *Miniſtry*; It is ſaid, *From the Prophets of* Jeruſalem, *is Prophaneneſs gone forth into all the Land*, Jer. 23. 15. There be ſome ſins which are *Domeſtick* and *Private*, which grow quickly into *National* and *Politick* ſins, as Sabbath-breaking, Whoredoms, Murther, Perjury, Rebellion againſt Parents whether *Natural* or *Civil* Parents, Oppreſſion, Idolatry, Hereſy, *Deut.* 13. 19, *and* 21. *Chapters*, Shewing the Puniſhment of Idolatry, Murther, Rebellion againſt Parents. And touching the Puniſhment of Whoredoms, ſee *Deut.* 22. 21, 22, *ver.* All which Texts ſhew the *National Epidemical* malignity of thoſe ſins; And therefore all *Iſrael* muſt hear and fear, and do

no

no more any ſuch wickedneſs as this among them.

2. *Aggravation of Family Impiety. It overthrows Churches.*

2. Conſider, That Ungodly Families, Overthrow Churches. Prophane hands in Pariſhes pull down Gods Houſe. It is Unbelief, Impenitency, Sabbath-breaking, common prodigious ſwearing, revelling at Wakes, Merry Nights, Greens, May Games, Healthing; Inlets to Debauchery and all Impiety, to Atheiſm, Blaſphemy, Whoredom, Contempt of Religion and Morallity. Theſe are the Boars of the Wood, and Beaſts of the Field, which waſte and devour the Lords Vineyard. Theſe are the ſins, which the *Prince of Darkneſs*, and his Infernal Rabble, ſtrive to maintain and propagate, to the Overthrow of Chriſtianity, yea, and (I had almoſt ſaid) *Humanity* it ſelf. The Tabernacles of *Edom*, and the *Iſhmaelites*, of *Moab*, and the *Hagarens*, *Gebal*, and *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, the *Philiſtines* with the Inhabitants of *Tyre* (I mean wicked Families) ſay, Come, let us cut them off from being a Nation (a Church) that the Name of *Iſrael* (the Name of the *Reformed Church of England*) may be no more in Remembrance, *Pſal.* 83. The General, Ignorant, and Scandalous ſins of too many called Chriſtians, Is like unto the Abomination of Deſolation in

in the Holy Place, *Dan.* 11. 31. Parochial ſins, which riſe out of Irreligious Houſeholds (as Perſecuting *Saul*'s) make Havock of the Church. And are (in effect) the Bloody *Hamans* againſt Gods Church: Family-wickedneſs of Princes, Prieſts, and People brought Deſtruction upon *Jeruſalem*, and demoliſht the Temple, the wonder of the World for Building, a Type of Chriſt in the fleſh, and of his Church upon Earth. *Joſhua* a Good Ruler, (at a full and honourable Aſſembly of Elders, Heads, Judges and Officers) delivereth this weighty charge in his Speech, Namely to fear the Lord and ſerve him in Sincerity and Truth: And not only in Cities and Towns, but in all Families, as the Principal Means for the Proſperity of Church and State, *Joſh.* 24. 1, 14, 15, 20. *Go ye now to my place which was in* Shiloh, *where I ſet my Name at the firſt, and ſee what I did to it. For the wickedneſs of my People* Iſrael, *Jer.* 7. 13. It is moſt certain, that the Church cannot flouriſh, unleſs the parts and members of it, perform Holy Duties and Offices in their Capacities, both in Church and Family. The want of Religion in Families, is the Decay of Churches. The difference between a Chriſtian Family and a Church, is that of Parts and Whole, if the parts be wicked and profane,

fane, the Constitution of the whole is Vitious and Depraved (more or less) according to the proportion of the parts.

Is it likely, That Heads of Families should be truly Devout in the Church, and Exercise no Religion at home? How shall we Judge of the Churches encrease, if not from Parochial Religion in Families? Wickedness of Families, maketh *the Glory of* Jacob *thin*, Isa. 17. 4. *Wicked Families eat up* Jacob, *devour*, *consume*, *and make his Habitation desolate*, Jer. 10. 25. As by appearance at Musters we Judge of the military Strength and Population of Kingdoms; so from Piety in Families the Strength and Prosperity of the Church and Christs Kingdom.

Mr. B. Gildas, Chap. 2. Sect. 5. And his Account of the Reason and Use of his Paraphrase on the N. T.

The Life of Religion, and the Welfare and Glory of Church and State, dependeth much on Family Government and Duty. If there be any hope of the amendment of a Wicked, Miserable, Distracted World, it must be mostly done by Family Religion and the Christian Education of Youth. What Countrey Groans not under the Confusions; miseries and horrid wickedness which are all the Fruits of Family neglects, and the careless and ill Education of Youth?

In the Preface to the Record for Diſſolution of Leſſer Monaſteries, the Reaſons returned were, *The Vitious Living of thoſe Houſes.* *Dr.* Fullers *Ch. Hiſt. lib.* 6. p. 310.

Another ſaith, That Fornication, Adulteries, Treachery, Soddomy, Inceſt, were Committed and Brooded in thoſe Houſes. And the Reverend Author goeth on, ſaying, *An Hundred Thouſand Whores made by the Unmarried Clergy.* Every ſtone hath a Tongue, to accuſe of Superſtition, Hypocriſy, Idleneſs, Luxury, the Late Owners. *Bp.* H. *In his Occa. Med.* 76. *On the Ruines of an Abby.*

How ſoon would the beſt part of the World Decay, upon the Corruption of Families? As in the Body Politick, ſo in the Myſtical, it thrives or waſteth, according to the Good or Bad Temperament of the Parts conſtituent. If Families of *Nominal* Chriſtians, were *Real* Living Members of the Church, ſucceeding Poſterity would encreaſe it. But we have cauſe to lament the weakneſs of it by reaſon the wickedneſs thereof. It is moſt evident from Scripture, that ſuch Profeſſors are not *True Members* of Gods Church, which are not *Living Members* of Chriſt. *He is not a* Jew *which is one outwardly neither is that Circumciſion which is outward in the Fleſh: But he is a* Jew *which is one inwardly, and Circumciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whoſe* *He is no good Churchman, who is not good Chriſtian at Home.*

whoſe Praiſe is not of Men but of God, Rom. 2. *two laſt verſes*, He is not a ſound Chriſtian that is Baptized, except he be inwardly renewed and ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt. The real Chriſtian *Is a New Creature*, *Old things are paſt away*, *behold all things are become New*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. And the New Creature hath put off his former Converſation, the old Man which is corrupt according to the Deceitful Luſts, And is renewed in the Spirit of his mind, And hath put on the New Man, which *after God is Created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs*, Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24. It is for want of Religious Government in Houſeholds, that the Lords Day is not better obſerved, that few profit under the Word, and that there are ſo few prepared Communicants at the Lords Table. It is from hence, That Miniſters have ſlender Congregations, and that Taverns, Alehouſes, Walks, Fields, Gardens, Tatling-houſes in the Neighbourhood, are more reſorted to, then the places of Gods Worſhip.

The miſchief of irreligious families.

Oh! All you Careleſs, Ignorant, Worldly, and looſe Heads of Families, let not this Aggravating Conſideration (Namely, That your Family-wickedneſs overthrows Churches) paſs out of your thoughts, till it pleaſe God to change you, and reform your

your Families. Are you Friends to the Church? Set up the Practiſe of Piety in your Families, which are the Nurſeries of the Church. This Duty is of Great weight and Importance to the Intereſt of Reformed Religion, and of the Church of *England*. If profeſſing Chriſtians, live in their Houſes, in due Conformity to their Covenant in Baptiſm, this (through Gods Mercy) will render our Church Beautiful as the Garden of the Lord; And our Land, as the ſmell of a Field, which the Lord hath Bleſſed. The *Romans* were as Careful to maintain their *Veſtal Fire*, as to preſerve the *Falladium*, as Pledges of Felicity to the Empire; Signifying to us Chriſtians, that, If Religion and Vertue, Piety and Policy, be Countenanc'd, and defended, and their Contraries, Profaneneſs and Immorallity ſuppreſt, and puniſhed, then the Lord will Build us, and not Pull us down, Plant us, and not Root us up. If we entertain the Life and Power of Chriſtianity and Honeſty in our Families, *Upon all the Glory ſhall be a Defence*, Iſa. 4. 5.

Si ita ſingulí id faciant quod pietatis eſt, totum corpus facilè Sanabitur, &c. Synop. Bodini de Repub. lib. 1. c. 1. q. 24.

Queſt. *What think you of Errours and Hereſies, tending to the ſubverting of Chriſtianity? And what may we think of Parties and*

A. Queſt.

and Sectaries, Are they not greater Enemies to the Church then profane Families?

Anſwer. *Anſw.* (1.) Here is not intended a Comparative Enquiry, whether Damnable Errours and Hereſies, do more miſchief in our Church, then wicked Families, but the main Buſineſs in hand, is to ſhew, that Profane and Wicked Families, are Pernicious Enemies to both Church and Sate. Sabbath-breaking, Swearing, Drunkenneſs, Filthineſs, Coveteouſneſs, Oppreſſion, Pride, Treachery, Perjury, Curſing, Cheating, Killing, Stealing, Lying, and ſuch like black infernal Sins in Families, will (without Reformation) Ruin Kingdoms and Churches.

(2.) Profane Scandalous Livers, are Practical Atheiſts and Hereticks, *They profeſs that they know God, but in good works they deny him, being abominable, and diſobedient and to every good work reprobate*, Tit. 1. *Laſt.*

(3.) Moral Evils of Sin and Intellectual, are Conjunct; A foul Stomach hath an aking Head, and corrupt Streams come from a corrupt Fountain, *St.* Paul, *In* Titus 3. 10. *And*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. Joyns together Hereticks, and Senſualiſts, or Scandalous

lous Perſons in Families and Pariſhes, as Fatal and Capital Enemies to the Church, and equally obnoxious to Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Puniſhments.

(4.) We have ſad experience what Miſchief, Parties and Sectaries, Rents and Schiſmatical Cauſes and Inſtruments, have wrought among Chriſtians, even to oppoſe, That Great Article of our Faith [*The Communion of Saints*].

(5.) He is no better then a Wicked Man, that hatcheth Diviſions, and Covets to make ſeparations, and will not admit of healing. Such were the *Donatiſts*, whoſe Tumults were ſuppreſt by the Magiſtrate.

O that all Scandalous Profane Families in Pariſhes, would ſit down, and ſet themſelves as in Gods preſence, ſeriouſly conſidering, that they are no more Living Members of Gods Church, then the Dead Bodies in the Church Yard, are Living Members of that Family, whence they came to be Interr'd.

3. Conſider, That Profane Families are great Enemies to the Miniſtry. If Heads of Families would perform their Duties, according 3. *Aggravation of Family Impiety: It renderetb the Miniſtry of Gods Word unprofitable.*

cording to Gods command, that is, to ſet up Religion in Families, Prayer, reading the Word of God, Catechizing, ſhewing good Examples, in the Week Day, and upon the Lords Day, cauſing their Families to keep it Holy, both publickly and privately; I ſay were their Families thus Governed, the word Preach'd would take better effect upon them. Is it likely that Preachers ſhould do any good, when Parents by open Profaneneſs, pull down what they ſet up? As if they were reſolved to live as they do, let the Miniſter ſay what he will. Is it likely that the Miniſtry ſhould proſper in a Congregation, when moſt Families will do nothing towards it themſelves, by keeping Holy the Lords Day, and ſerving and worſhipping him in the Week Day? Would Maſters of Families take hold with the Miniſter, Religion would enter into Families through Gods Bleſſing. But O what little is done to help forward the ſalvation of Souls by Good Parents! They ought to prepare and break up the fallow ground of their Families, they ought to Root out the Weeds of Vice, and pluck up corrupt Principles out of this little ſpot of ground, that it may be fit to receive the Seed of the word with profit, *Jer.* 4. 3, *Hoſ.* 10. 12.

Gover-

Governours of Families ought to make their Families Nurſeries for the Church, *i. e.* well Husbanded, well diſciplined, and well taught. In their own Houſes. Parents are both Magiſtrates and Miniſters, in a Subordinate way, to the training up an hopeful Generation, for Church and Kingdom. Why do Ignorant, Looſe, Worldly, Careleſs, Prayerleſs Families, caſt off their Duty upon ſureties for the Chriſtian Education of their Children? Whereas they themſelves ſtand Bound as they are Believers, not only to Dedicate them to the Lord by Baptiſm, but as their Childrens Sponſors, *To bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 4.

4. The Barrenneſs of the ground, upon which the Seed of the word is ſowed, is cauſe of ſorrow as well as diſcouragement to a faithful Miniſter. Is it not matter of diſcontent and ſorrow, that the Seed-time for Corporal Bread, is ſtopt by ſome rude wicked fellows, in the Neighbourhood? And do you think (O wicked Families) that it is not greater ſorrow, to Godly Miniſters in their Office, that the Seed-time for the Bread of Souls is hindered by you? Is not Chriſt himſelf Lord of this Harveſt, who is Judge of the

4. *Aggravation of the ſin of Family-Impiety: It is a great Diſcouragement to the Office of the Miniſtry.*

World? Are not you the Tares, and muſt not they be caſt into the Fire, not only for Being Tares, but for hindering the Wheat, *Mat.* 13. 40, 41 ? It was the Great grief of that Holy Man and Famous Divine, Mr. *Ric. Greenham* (about the 35 *Y. of Q. Eliz.*) That notwithſtanding his Preaching, Prayers, Tears, he had a Barren, Obſtinate, Ignorant Pariſh.

Dr. F. *Church Hiſtory, Book* 9.

Greenham *had Paſtures green,*
But Sheep full lean.

Is it not matter of ſorrow, that the good Miniſter finds little more ſhew of Religion in his Congregation, then what cometh in Courſe upon the Sabbath-Day, or that moſt in the Pariſh part with Religion, as ſoon as they turn their backs on the place of Gods Worſhip? This troubleth the good Miniſter, that moſt Heads of Families deny that at home, which they ſeem to like well in the Congregation; that ſome (it may be) bring their Bibles to the Church, and never take them up all the week after; that they Joyn in Publick Prayers, and will not Pray in their Families; And laſtly, This diſcourageth and troubleth the good Miniſter, that many carry it like Chriſtians in Gods Houſe, and live like Heathens in their

their own. Our Bleſſed Saviour, wept over *Jeruſalem*, ſaying, Oh *Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not*, Mat. 23. 37? *When he beheld the City he wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy Day, the things which belong unto thy Peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes*, Luke 19. 41, 42. After this ſort the Prophet is affected, *If you will not hear it, my Soul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your Pride*, &c. Jer. 13. 17. O ye Irreligious Families, What will you do? Will you be obſtinate and impenitent, becauſe your Good Miniſter, nay, your Bleſſed Lord and Saviour, is Tender and Compaſſionate? Will you be careleſs and ſecure becauſe your Miniſter is commanded to watch for your Souls? And will you be cruel to the Souls of your Families, becauſe Miniſters are ſent of God, to Preach Faith and Repentance, Mercy and Forgiveneſs to you? Will you harden your Hearts, and ſtand it out, becauſe God by his Miniſters, is praying you in Chriſts ſtead to be reconciled to God?

5. *Aggravation of Family Impiety. It provoketh God to take away the Goſpel from us.*

5. Conſider, That Profane Families do provoke God to take away the Goſpel from us, and give it to a Nation that will bring forth the Fruits thereof, *Mat.* 21. 43. God hath been pleaſed to Plant his Vineyard in *England*, which ſince the Reformation hath taken Root, and ſpread her Branches in abundance. And Bleſſed be the Almighty, the Wall thereof (our good Laws) is not broken down. But where are the Fruits? We hear of common ſcandalous ſins of Drunkenneſs, Swearing, Whoredom and Pernicious Doctrines; And the ſin of Sabbath-breaking in Towns and Villages is notorious: Notwithſtanding his Majeſties Royal Proclamation for the ſuppreſſing and preventing of Profaneneſs, diſſolute Living and all Immoralities, and for the Countenancing of Vertue and Piety in this Church and Kingdom. What ſhall we ſay of Loiterers, Travellers, Tatlers going from Houſe to Houſe? What ſhall we ſay of Debarched Prodigals, Harlots, Hectors at Drunken and Filthy Meetings? How few Families in Cities, Towns, or Villages do make any better Account of the Lords Day, then Almanack Holy Days? How few Chriſtians keep Holy the Lords Day, after Service in the Publick Aſſembly? It were

K. W. the IIId. 10th. Y. of his Reign, Feb. 24. 1697.

Juſt

Just with God to Translate the Gospel to another People, and to put a Bill of Divorce into our Mothers hand, for the too common Disgust of the Power of Christianity and Practise of Piety. It were Just with God, to deliver his Strength into Captivity, and his Glory into the Enemies hand, *Psal.* 78. 61. Referring to the sins of *Eli* his Sons, in the Priesthood, 1 *Sam.* 2 *Chap.* And to the Punishment, in the 4 *Chap.* not only of the Priests but People also. And, we of this our Church, both Ministers and People, for our sins of *other Kinds*, have cause to fear least God deprive us of our Strength and Glory, *i. e.* his gracious and influxive presence.

6. Consider, That this Profaneness of Families, is the greatest reproach upon them. As sin leaveth behind it the sorest wound upon Conscience; So, It marketh the Person, with the Vilest Brand. What can expiate that Guilt, which staineth the Heavens, Curseth the Earth, hath cast down Angels from their Glory, and made Man *as vile as the Beasts that Perish*? Who can blot out that, which is written in Heaven in Gods Book, on Earth in the Consciences of Men, and unhappily Copied out, to be written in the memory of succeeding Posterity?

6. *Aggravation of Family-Sins. They bring the greatest Reproach upon such Families.*

Peccati macula durat in æternum ex ſe, & Secluſa Dei miſericordiâ.

ſterity? Who can purge that away, which defileth the Souls of Men? It is not devouring time, nor flight, nor Baniſhment, nor change of Climate, nor ſtrange Inhabitants, no, nor Death it ſelf of the Infamous ſinner, that can free his Conſcience from the Guilt of his ſin, and wipe off the reproach and everlaſting ſhame thereunto belonging, *Dan.* 12. 2. And thoſe that ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth ſhall awake, ſome to everlaſting life, and ſome to ſhame and everlaſting contempt. *The Seed of Evil doers ſhall never be renowned*, Iſa. 14. 20. *The memory of the Juſt is Bleſſed, but the Name of the Wicked ſhall Rot*, Prov. 10. 7. Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy Houſe, by cutting off many People and haſt ſinned againſt thy Soul, *Hab.* 2. 10. Are not *Ahabs* and *Jezebels* ſins upon the File of Reproach? There was none like *Ahab*, who ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs, whom *Jezebel* his Wife that Curſed Woman ſtirred up. Add hereunto, *Jeroboam the Son of* Nebat *who made* Iſrael *to ſin*: And this is, That King *Ahaz*, Simon *the Sorcerer*, Elymas *the Sorcerer*, Judas *the Traitor*. Theſe Perſons to this day have their Σπιλιδικὸς λόγος, their Brand of Infamy. Man never came to looſe his Honour but by ſin, then he Marr'd his Creation-Robe, and was clad with Guilt, Shame

The way to true Honour.

Shame and Amazement. To this ancient Eſtate of Honour and Communion with God, none but the Annointed of the Lord can reſtore, Inveſting with a New-Creation-Robe of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs. Well then, Grace is the Foundation of Priſtine Glory. The way to raiſe thy ſelf and Family is by the ſteps of Piety and Vertue, down then with Wickedneſs and Vice, and ſet up Religion in thy Family. *Them that Honour me I will Honour, and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*, 1 Sam. 2. 30. It is ſaid, That the Valiant *Roman Marcellus*, built two Temples of { *Honour*, / *Vertue*, } in ſuch manner that none could enter into that of *Honour*, but he muſt firſt paſs through the other of *Vertue*. By the *Laws of Armory*, none ought to be promoted to Civil Honour, unleſs they be Loyal, Temperate, Religious, Valiant, Charitable to the poor, and ready to attend their Soveraign to the Wars: And can any hope that God will Honour any ſuch Families or Perſons as trample upon his Holy Laws, Blaſpheme his Name, renounce their Allegiance in Holy Baptiſm, and give no Honour and

Nemo de-niq; egregius, niſi qui bonus & innocens. Lact. lib. 5. Cap. 15.

Plut. Vita Marcelli.

and Service to that God, who hath condeſcended to take them for his Covenant Servants. Can we ſay properly that ſuch as theſe are Chriſtians? Are they not the ſcandal and ſhame of Chriſtianity? Are they Members of Gods Church, Are they not of the Synagogue of Sathan, *Rev.* 2. 9? It's very excellently ſaid, by a Learned Divine to this matter, as followeth: All the Members of the Body have their proper and diſtinct Offices, according as they have their proper and diſtinct Faculties. As in the Body, that indeed is no Member, which cannot call it ſelf by any other Name, then by a common Name of a Member: So in the Church, he that cannot ſtile himſelf by any other Name then a Chriſtian, doth indeed but Uſurp that too. If thou ſaiſt, thou art of the Body: I demand then, what is thy Office in the Body? If thou haſt no Office in the Body, then thou art at the beſt, but [*Tumor prætur naturam*] a Scab, or Botch, or Wen (as Phyſitians call them) or ſome other Monſtrous Excreſcency upon the Body, but certainly thou art no true Member of the Body. And if thou art no part of the Body, How dareſt thou make Challenge to the Head, by miſcalling thy ſelf a Chriſtian? Therefore oh Chriſtian beware of having a Name to Live,

Bp. Sand. his third Sermon Ad Cler. pag. 109, 110.

Live, and yet Dead. As a Dead Man is no Man, ſo the Nominal Chriſtian is no Chriſtian.

7. Why wilt thou O Profeſſor of Chriſtianity, live in thy Family, As without God in the World? Why wilt thou Heathenize thy ſelf and Poſterity. Idolaters Condemn thee for thy courſe of Life, as they did (by the Prophets Teſtimony) the profeſſing People of the true God under the Law; *Paſs over the* Iſles *of* Chittim, *and ſee and ſend to* Kedar, *and conſider diligently, and ſee if there be any ſuch a thing, Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which are yet no Gods, but my People have changed their Glory, for that which doth not profit?* Jer. 2. 30, 31. All People will walk, every one in the Name of his God, and why wilt not thou walk in the Name of the Lord thy God, *Micah* 4. 5? O Chriſtian, thou art not only Condemned by Idolaters, for thy Irreligion in thy Family, but Condemned by thy own ſelf; As *Joſhua* ſaid unto *Iſrael*, *Ye are Witneſſes againſt your ſelves, that ye have choſen you the Lord to ſerve him, and they ſaid, we are Witneſſes*, Joſhua 24. 22. Thou (O Chriſtian) haſt choſen the Lord to ſerve him, and to put away

7. *Aggravation of Family-Impiety. It is condemned by Heathens.*

away the Idols of the Fleſh and the World, by thy Covenant in Baptiſm. Therefore take up *Joſhua*'s Reſolution; and ſay, *As for me, and my Houſe, we will ſerve the Lord*, Joſh. 24. 15. O therefore, be Houſeholds of faith, govern your Families in the fear of God, and hope of his Mercy. O ye Worldly, Ignorant, Carnal Parents, Maſters and Heads of Families, will it be comfortable parting at Death from your Children and from your Servants, when you go out of this World, not only with the guilt of your own ſins, but of your Children and Servants? You ſay you believe in Chriſt, and yet Live without Repentance; This *Faith* the Scripture calls *Hiſtorical*, and it is the Faith of Devils, ſuch Believers are Mockers and Impoſtors. And (as one ſaith excellently) more then [*Men*] in the Articles of their Belief, and worſe then [*Swine*] in their Lives. The Lord have mercy upon all ſuch Families, that call not on his Name, and grant them Grace to reform their Houſes as becometh Chriſtians, for their own Comfortable Account, and the benefit of ſucceeding poſterity, at the great Day of Appearance; That ſo God may put his Name in their Houſes, and leave an Entail of a [*Bleſſing*] and not of a [*Curſe*] upon the ſurviving Generation,

Charron of Wiſdom, pag. 262.

For

For the Lord our God is a Jealous God, viſiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Genera- II. Com-
tion, of them that hate him, and ſhewing mandment.
mercy unto Thouſands, of them that Love him and keep his Commandments.

To him, the Habitation of whoſe Throne are Juſtice and Judgment, and before whoſe preſence are Mercy and Truth, be Glory and Worſhip from all Families for evermore. *Amen*, And *Amen.*

FINIS.

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